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ENGLAND'S  
PRAYER-BOOK  

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REV. T. B. SIKES



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# England's Prayer-Book :

A SHORT AND PRACTICAL

## EXPOSITION OF THE SERVICES.

BY THE

REV. THOS. B. SIKES, M.A., (OXON,)

RECTOR OF HALSTREAD, KENT.

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" I WILL PRAY WITH THE SPIRIT, AND I WILL PRAY WITH THE  
UNDERSTANDING ALSO."

1 Cor. xiv. 15.

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## PREFACE.

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THE Author of the following pages, during many years of ministerial experience, has perceived with regret the excessive ignorance that frequently prevails even amongst regular attendants at Public Worship on the subject of the Church and its admirable Liturgy, and though he has read and derived benefit from several works of a learned character, he has failed to find one that simply explains the different services.

This has led him to devote some of his leisure hours to the compilation of this little work; and he humbly hopes and prays that, by God's grace, it may be useful, and may tend to general edification.





## ENGLAND'S PRAYER BOOK.

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THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND dates its existence, not as some suppose from its Reformation three centuries ago, but from the Apostolic age. Tertullian, an ancient Father of the Church, asserts that Christianity was introduced into Britain by one of the Apostles.

He observes that places which were considered inaccessible to the Roman arms were already reached by the heralds of the Cross.

It is certain that the British Church was fully established in our land in the fourth century, and we read of British Bishops attending foreign Councils. For instance, some of them were present at the Council of Arles, A.D. 314; and very many at the Council of Nice, A.D. 325.

After that, Christianity was greatly persecuted and in danger of being exterminated by the inroads of the heathen Saxon conquerors, so much so that

the Church was driven into the remote districts of Wales and Cornwall, and into parts of Scotland and Ireland.

The Saxon Heptarchy, or seven kingdoms into which England was divided, continued heathen till St. Augustine, in the year 597, landed in Kent, being sent on a mission to convert the rude inhabitants by the Pope of Rome, Gregory the Great.

He, with his forty companions, were kindly received by Ethelbert King of Kent, whose Queen, Bertha, the daughter of the King of Paris, had been brought up in the Christian religion.

Augustine preached the Gospel to the King and his Court at Canterbury, and baptized Ethelbert and many of his subjects in the Church of St. Martin, just outside the city.

Christianity soon spread throughout the seven kingdoms; and Augustine, by the grace of the Pope and the permission of the King, was consecrated the first Archbishop of Canterbury and Primate of the Church.

When Gregory sent a mission into Britain, he seems to have been under an impression that the whole country was heathen; but when Augustine arrived he found that, though the Saxons were idolaters, there was still a British Church in existence with seven Bishops at its head, and a great number

of Clergy, who showed by their conduct to the Roman Missionary that they had no idea of submitting to the supremacy of the Pope, but intended to retain their national and ecclesiastical independence.

One of Augustine's principal difficulties related to the difference of ritual between the Roman and the Gallican and British Churches.

And so he wrote in the following manner on the subject to Gregory:—

“Whereas the Faith is one, why are the centres of the Church various? And why is one manner of celebrating the Holy Communion used in the Holy Roman Church, and another in that of the Gauls?” And when Augustine met the seven Bishops of the ancient British Church in conference under an oak, he said to them, “You act in many particulars contrary to our customs, or rather to the customs of the Universal Church, and yet, if you will comply with me in these three points—viz., to keep Easter at the due time, to perform the Administration of Baptism, by which we are born again to God, according to the custom of the Holy Roman and Apostolic Church, and jointly with us to preach the Word of God to the nation of the Angles—we will readily tolerate all your other customs, though contrary to our own.” Gregory, in answering Augustine's letter, gave him the wisest and most

Christian advice : “ You, my brother (said he), are acquainted with the customs of the Roman Church in which you were brought up. But it is my pleasure that if you have found anything either in the Roman, Gallican, or any other Church which may be more acceptable to Almighty God, you carefully make choice of the same : and sedulously teach the Church of the Angles, which is at present new in the faith, whatever you can gather from the several Churches. For things are not to be loved for the sake of places, but places for the sake of good things.

“ Select, therefore, from each Church those things that are pious, religious, and correct ; and when you have made these up into one body, instil this into the minds of the English for their use.”

How different is this from the spirit of mediæval and modern Popery, which would lord it over God’s heritage and allow no form of divine worship independent of the See of Rome.

For a long period the early British Church, in spite of all the endeavours of Augustine and his successors to subjugate it, retained its freedom ; and even when the ecclesiastical quarrels were healed, and the British, Saxon, and Norman Churches, like the several nations became one, they seemed never to have wholly adopted the Roman Ritual.

There were various uses, or forms of celebrating public worship, in the different dioceses : such as the Sarum use, the uses of Hereford, Bangor, York, Lincoln, and Exeter. There was also the use of St. Paul's.

At the time of the Norman Conquest, in the eleventh century, there was some attempt made to secure uniformity of Divine Service ; and in 1085, Osmund, Bishop of Salisbury and Chancellor of England, revised the ritual books of the English Church. He remodelled the Offices, and framed a Service-book so successfully that the use of Sarum, as it was called, was in a great measure adopted throughout the whole Church, especially in the southern dioceses.

“The Church of Salisbury (says a writer of the thirteenth century) being conspicuous above all other Churches, like the sun in the heavens, diffusing its light everywhere and supplying their defects.”

The Reformation commenced, as most people know, in the reign of Henry VIII., though it was then more of a political than a religious movement.

The reformed doctrines had for centuries before been making their way in the hearts of the people, especially when, in the reign of Edward III., Wyckliffe translated the Scriptures, and denounced the errors and corruptions of Rome. Henry VIII.

continued, as it seems, a Roman Catholic in heart to the end of his days, though he was God's instrument in setting our Church free from the trammels of Popery, through his dispute with the Pope on the subject of Queen Catherine's divorce.

However, in Henry's reign some movement was made towards a Reformation, and a revised edition of the Sarum use was issued by the influence of his powerful minister, Cardinal Wolsey.

This edition was printed in the year 1516, and varied but little from the ancient forms.

The rubrics were simplified, and the Holy Scripture was ordered to be read without omission.

A second edition was published in 1533, and then began that most important movement for the translation of the Bible and the using the English language entirely in the services of the Church.

Some confusion was likely to arise from the diversity of translations; and so it was agreed that the Great Bible (Miles Coverdale's translation) should be used, and in 1541 a proclamation was issued that "every parish which had not yet provide a Bible, should not fail before the Feast of All Saints to buy and provide Bibles of the largest and greatest volume, and cause the same to be set and fixed in the Parish Church."

The price of the Bible was fixed at 10s. unbound,

or 12s. "well and sufficiently bound, trimmed, and clasped."

In the same year it was also ordered that the Service-books should be corrected and reformed, and that the names of Popes and of Thomas à Becket should be erased.

In 1542 a Committee of Convocation was appointed to revise the old Latin Service-book or Primers.

But little was done until Henry VIII.'s death, though that monarch allowed the Litany to be set forth in English, and to be publicly used.

On the accession of Edward VI., in the year 1547, a still further step was taken for the reformation of the Church and its Services.

The young king had been trained in the doctrines of Protestantism, and was greatly influenced by Archbishop Cranmer and the other Reformers.

The Archbishop, with the assistance of Bishops Ridley and Latimer, in order to teach the people generally the truths of Christ's religion, composed the First Book of Homilies, "to be read in Churches every Sunday by those clergy who were not preachers."

A paraphrase of Erasmus on the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles was translated, and ordered to be placed in Churches with the Great Bible.



And for the instruction of the young, Cranmer published a Catechism in English, which seems to have been a translation from a Latin Lutheran work written in Germany.

In the year 1547 the Convocation approved of the Archbishop's suggestion to administer the Holy Communion to the Laity under both kinds, viz., of bread and wine, "according to the truth of Scripture and the most approved antiquity," and it directed a new office to be composed for the purpose.

This under royal proclamation was published in 1547. And the first Prayer-book of King Edward VI. was finished by a Committee of Bishops and other "notable learned men," about seven months afterwards.

The objects of the compilers of the Prayer-book are declared in the Preface, "that the whole realm should now have but one use in Divine service; that the rubrical directions should be simplified; that the Psalms should be all repeated in their order, instead of a few being said daily, and the rest utterly omitted.

"That the Lessons should include the whole Bible or the greatest part thereof in a continuous course.

"That the readings of the Chapters should not be interrupted by Anthems, Responds, and Invitations; that nothing should be read but the pure

Word of God, the Holy Scriptures, or that which is evidently grounded upon the same, and that all should be in the English tongue."

The principal differences between the first Prayer-book of Edward VI. and the one now in use, are the following:—"Morning and evening service began with the Lord's Prayer, and ended with the third Collect; the Creed was not said, but the Athanasian was appointed on six festivals. There was no Rubric to direct the use of the Litany as a part of the morning prayer."

The Communion Service began with a Psalm—the Commandments were not read—the prayers differed from our present form, but chiefly in their arrangement: the Prayer for the Church Militant was the beginning of the Consecration prayer.

The Virgin Mary was especially mentioned in praise offered for saints departed.

The consecration included a prayer for the sanctification of the elements with the Holy Spirit and the Word. Water was mixed with the wine—the words used in delivering the elements to the communicants were only the first clause of those now used.

The sign of the Cross was retained twice in the consecration of the elements, as it was also in Confirmation and Matrimony, and in the Visita-

tion of the Sick, if the sick person desired to be anointed.

In Baptism the sign of the Cross was made upon the child's forehead and breast.

A Form of Exorcism was used. The action of baptizing was thus ordered :—"Naming the child, he shall dip it in the water thrice : first dipping the right side, second the left side, the third time dipping the face toward the font : so it be discreetly and warily done."

The minister then put upon the child "the white vesture," commonly called "the Chrisom," and anointed him upon the head.

The water in the font was changed once in a month at least : and before any child was baptized in the water so changed, prayers were said for the sanctification of the water, including those which are now said immediately before the Baptism : these petitions, therefore, were omitted whenever the water had been used for a previous Baptism. In the Burial Service prayer was offered for a deceased person ; and a collect, epistle, and gospel were appointed for a communion at a burial.

On Whit-Sunday, 1549, the services of the English Liturgy were used in the Cathedral of St. Paul in obedience to a statute passed in the preceding year—"that the said form of Common

Prayer, and no other, should after the Feast of Pentecost next following, be used in all His Majesty's dominions."

The first copy of the book was printed in May, 1549, and another addition in June of the same year, and in the March following another was issued with no material variations.

In the year 1551 another revision of the Liturgy took place, and considerable alterations were made, some of which were suggested by the Foreign Reformers, Bucer and Martyr, the latter of whom was Professor at Oxford, and had at times resided with Cranmer, at Lambeth.

The Prayer-book was thus brought very much to its present form, but it was not much used in the reign of Edward VI., as soon after its completion the young king died, and was succeeded by a cruel and bigotted persecutor, so well known in history as "Bloody Mary."

Her accession led to the restoration of the old Popish system, and of the Latin service in the Church.

The great reformers Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, with many of the clergy and laity, who would not conform to the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, or the change of the elements of the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper into

the actual body and blood of our Redeemer, were committed to the flames.

An agreement of reconciliation was formed with the See of Rome and Cardinal Pole, a relation of the Queen, was made Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Reformed Prayer-book, which had been used for four and a half years was forbidden by law in October, 1553.

When the bloodthirsty Mary was called to her account after a short and ignominious reign, the hope of the nation revived in the accession of her sister, Elizabeth, (November 17, 1558). Then the Papal dominion ceased, and by the authority of Convocation, and the Parliament, the English Liturgy was again placed on a legal footing.

In re-establishing the reformed religion it became a question which of the two Prayer-books of King Edward's reign should be used, and a committee of learned divines was appointed to examine their respective merits.

A proclamation was issued to forbid preaching, but it allowed "the Epistle and Gospel, and the Ten Commandments to be read in English, but without any exposition, and forbade any other manner of public prayer, rite, or ceremony in the Church, but that which is already used, and by law received, or the Common Litany used at this

present in Her Majesty's own chapel, and the Lord's Prayer and Creed in English, until consultation may be had by Parliament." When it assembled in 1559, after the commission had sent in their report, a statute was passed, called Queen Elizabeth's Act of Uniformity, and the second Prayer-book of Edward VI. was re-established with a few alterations.

Uniformity of worship seemed now to be settled ; but a powerful sect called the Puritans arose in Elizabeth's reign, who, though they were awed into obedience to the Church by terror of the great Queen, took advantage of the weakness of her successor, and openly assailed its doctrines and practices.

Their first measure was to present to King James I., an address which was called the Millenary Petition, from the fact of its being supposed to be subscribed by a thousand ministers, though in reality only about three-fourths of that number signed the document.

They complained of the services and government of the Church of England, and prayed the King to reform certain abuses. James, having seen so much of the evils of Puritanism in his younger days in Scotland, was not favourably inclined to its adherents: nevertheless, as he was fond of disputa-

tion and argument, he summoned a conference of Bishops and other Divines, and some of the leading Puritans at his Palace of Hampton Court, in the year 1604. He himself presided as moderator, and was assisted by the Lord Chancellor and the Attorney-General.

The council lasted only three days, and the King was so offended at the arrogant demands of the Puritans, that he told them that "he would have none of their arguing, and that if they did not conform, and quickly too, they should hear of it."

A few alterations, however, were agreed to by the King and Bishops; the most important point gained by the conference was an order for a new translation of the Bible, which was ably carried out in James's reign, and which forms our present version.

When Charles I. succeeded to the throne, no alteration of any importance was made in the Prayer-book.

Though in course of his reign the words in the prayer for the Royal Family—"Which has promised to be a Father to Thine elect and their seed," were omitted, as seeming to favour too much the opinions of Calvin.

In the course also of this troubled reign a reformed Liturgy was published for the use of Scot-

land ; and by desire of the King, the Scotch Bishops who had been established by him in that country, endeavoured to force the English Prayer-book on their countrymen, but with no success. The Scotch Liturgy was in a great measure the work of Archbishop Laud, though it follows in most particulars the service book of England.

With the approval of the King and the Primate it was published in 1637, and though it never came into general use, it influenced the last revision of the Prayer-book, which took place in 1661. During the Great Rebellion, the Prayer-book was proscribed by law, and the members of the Church had to worship in secret ; and the whole government, both in Church and State was overturned, and sectarianism and confusion domineered over the land. Happily the triumph of the miserable factions was of short duration, and the restoration of monarchy brought about the restoration of the Church of England.

Before King Charles II. obtained his crown, a deputation of nobles and Presbyterians waited on him at the Hague, and assured him that they had no objection to a moderate Episcopacy.

The King replied to them that "he would refer the settling of matters to the two Houses of Parliament,



who were the best judges of what indulgence, or toleration, was necessary for the repose of the kingdom."

Afterwards they represented to Charles that "as the Common Prayer had been discontinued in England for several years, it might be impolitic for His Majesty to revive the use of it in his own chapel immediately on his return: the King, somewhat indignantly replied, that 'by the liberty he granted them, they were not authorised to infringe on his.'"

When the King was restored to his throne, the Liturgy, which had not been publicly used for fourteen years, was re-established, and the bishops returned to their sees, and the other clergy to their preferments.

Another attempt was made to reconcile the Puritans to the Prayer-book, and an assembly of twenty-one divines on each side was called together, and this was termed "The Savoy Conference," because it met at the Palace of the Savoy, in the Strand. Its sittings lasted from April 15th to July 24th, 1661.

On account of the unreasonable demands of the Puritanical party, no result followed, and nothing like union could be effected.

Committees, however, were appointed to review the Prayer-book by the Convocations of the two provinces of Canterbury and York.

And some few alterations were made in the services chiefly through the advice of one of the commissioners, Dr. Cosin, the learned Bishop of Durham.

The revised Book was approved by the two Houses of Convocation, and by the King, who sent it to Parliament; and the Act of Uniformity was passed by the Lords and Commons, and received the royal assent on May 19th, 1662.

No further alterations have been made in the Prayer-book since that time, though another plan for revising it was introduced by Dr. Tillotson, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury in the reign of William III.

Since that time it has been adopted by the American Church, and used in our fifty colonial dioceses in all parts of the world. It has, like the Bible, been translated into many languages.

As a Book it is worthy of all honour and veneration. "It was sown with the blood of the Martyrs of our Reformation, and it has passed through many periods of trouble: and it still lives, not only as a guide to the devotion of worshippers, but as a rule of faith and of doctrine, and long may it con-

tinue in the mercy of God to be the Book of Common Prayer."

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*On the Title of the Book.*

Our Book of Public Devotion is called "the Book of Common Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church."

The term "Common Prayer," meaning the order for Morning and Evening Service, which is to be used by all the congregation on ordinary occasions.

Whereas "the Sacraments and other Rites of the Church" are used only by a portion of the congregation at particular seasons.

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*Of the Order for Morning and Evening Prayer  
Daily, throughout the Year.*

The early Christians, besides their more solemn Service on Sundays, were accustomed to meet together for Public Worship every day, Morning and Evening. And one of the ancient Fathers, Cyprian, tells us that they used to have a daily Administration of the Holy Communion.

The Second Book of Homilies, says "to the said House or Temple of God, at all times, by common order appointed, are all people that be Godly indeed bound with all diligence to resort, unless by sickness or other most urgent causes they be letted therefrom."

It is much to be regretted, that the age in which we live is so much less religious than the Apostolic time, that the systems and principles of the Prayer-book cannot be more fully carried out. When churches are opened in towns, for daily public worship, there is generally a great scarcity of worshippers; and when the experiment is tried in villages, it not unfrequently happens that there is a total absence of any congregation.

We have certainly to pray for a deeper revival of religion among us, so that we may then say, "Praised be the Lord daily, even the God who helpeth us, and poureth His benefits upon us." "Day by day we magnify Thee, and we worship Thy Name, ever world without end."

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#### *Of the Rubrics.*

The Rubrics are rules or directions, placed in different parts of the Service for its proper performance. They are so called from the Latin

word "Rubrica," which means red. These directions being formerly, and now frequently printed in red characters; they are distinguished from the text by appearing in a smaller type.

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*Of the Rubrics before the Sentences, and the Sentences themselves.*

This Rubric commands the officiating Minister to read with a loud voice the sentences which follow.

This is a very necessary direction, for previous to the Reformation the Priest and people used to repeat the Lord's Prayer and the Creed in secret.

The first English Book of Common Prayer, ordained that "the Priest being in the Choir shall begin with a loud voice the Lord's Prayer."

But seeing that Prayer requires so much attention and preparation of mind, our Reformers wisely judged that the Service of the Church should commence with certain appropriate passages selected from Holy Scripture.

"Before thou prayest prepare thyself, and be not as one that tempteth the Lord," says the Book of Ecclesiasticus (xviii. 23). And the wise man also

said "Let not thy heart be hasty to utter any word before God" (Ecclesiastes v. 2). As the Jews were instructed to meditate in silence before commencing their devotions in the Synagogue, and as in the early Church the leader of the congregation prepared their minds for Prayer by an introductory address, so now the Church begins her ministrations as the Saviour began His mission upon earth, by urging men "to repent and believe the Gospel."

The first sentence is addressed to those who are of the humble spirit of the Publican; the last, to self-righteous Pharisees, who fancy that they are without sin; the general tendency of the sentences is to call to repentance. For sin unrepented of disqualifies men for Prayer, and prevents their petitions being accepted at the Throne of Grace.

The eighth sentence is suitable for the season of Advent. The fourth, fifth, and ninth, for Lent.

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### *Of the Exhortation.*

After the sentences, the Church has added a solemn Exhortation, principally to direct us how to perform properly the following Confession of Sin.

This part of the Service has been termed a Homily

on Divine Worship, and it was introduced on the presumption that most people who come to church are not sufficiently instructed in the true nature of its Service.

The objects of Divine Worship are described in it, under five general divisions.

(1.) The Confession of Sin. (2.) Absolution. (3.) Thanksgiving and Praise. (4.) The hearing of God's Word. (5.) Prayer for Bodily and Spiritual benefits.

That we may not offer public worship in vain, and return home with a curse instead of a blessing, the Minister, who is God's ambassador, knowing that He is ready to receive those who are truly penitent, entreats us to accompany him with a pure heart, and not with a loud and clamorous, but humble voice to the Throne of Grace, in such a tone as is suited to the solemnity of the General Confession.

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### *Of the Confession.*

This part of the Service is to be said after the Minister, by all kneeling.

Confession of Sin is one of the most solemn and important parts of Divine Service.

Till a person has confessed his sin, he has no right to join in the public worship of God. It is therefore placed at the commencement of the Service, and it is the duty of all to be early in their attendance at the House of Prayer.

There was not such carelessness and irreverence in the early Church, as we so frequently witness at the present day.

“With us (says Basil, an ancient Father of the Church) all the people come early in the morning, while it is yet dark, to the House of Prayer, and with sorrow, and with affliction, and with profusion of tears, make confession unto God.

Forms of Confession are to be found in all the ancient Services, but there is none more beautiful and comprehensive than our own.

It has been well observed by Archdeacon Freeman, in his principles of Divine Service, that this general confession seems to be founded on the 7th chapter of Romans, 8—25.

“We have followed too much  
the devices and desires  
of our own hearts.”

“Sin wrought in me all  
concupiscence.”

“We have offended against  
Thy holy Laws.”

“The Law is holy, but I  
am carnal, sold under  
sin.”

“We have left undone those  
things which we ought  
to have done.”

“The good that I would, I  
do not.”



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| <p>"We have done those things which we ought not to have done."</p> <p>"And there is no health in us."</p> <p>"But Thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders."</p> <p>"According to Thy promises declared unto Mankind, in Christ Jesus our Lord."</p> | <p>"But the evil which I would not, that I do."</p> <p>"In me dwelleth no good thing."</p> <p>O! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?"</p> <p>"I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."</p> |
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### *Of the Absolution.*

It is noted in the Rubric that this part of the service is to be "pronounced by the Priest alone, standing, the people still kneeling." The meaning of these words is that no layman, or deacon, one of the inferior order of ministers, is to repeat the Absolution, a word taken from the Latin *absolvere*, to remit, or forgive.

The Absolution is to be pronounced by the Priest alone, and by him standing, in token of his authority in declaring the will of God, whose ambassador he is. The people, kneeling, to show their sense of humility and reverence for the joyful tidings of pardon from Almighty God, conveyed through the mouth of His minister.

The propriety of introducing the Absolution into this part of the service is acknowledged by the learned and distinguished Reformer, Calvin. He says, "We are every one of us ready to admit that after a general confession to subjoin some signal promise which may excite hope of pardon and reconciliation, is a very useful and beneficial practice, and from the beginning I was desirous of adopting this method, but I yielded too easily to the apprehension of others."

The Church of England places the Absolution or Remission of Sin immediately after the General Confession, because the people are supposed to be humbled for their sins, and to need consolation.

That is, therefore, to be pronounced by him to whom the Lord hath committed the ministry of reconciliation.

When King David acknowledged his guilt, and said to Nathan, "I have sinned," the Prophet was commissioned to say unto him, "The Lord hath put away thy sin."

And so here, when the worshippers of God have humbled themselves before Him, He, who is the "Pardoner of iniquity, transgression and sin," and "who desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may be converted and live," proclaims through His minister to "all who truly repent, and

unfeignedly believe His Gospel," the gracious assurance of the pardon of their sins.

This Absolution is pronounced over a mixed congregation, and is only efficacious in the case of those who really feel what they have said in the Confession, and comply with the conditions of the Gospel, viz., "repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."

To any hypocritical or formal worshipper the Absolution gives no encouragement—the Priest does not absolve in his own name, but proclaims the terms of pardon granted by "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." "He," *i.e.*, Almighty God, "pardoneth and absolveth." The pardon of sin is conveyed to a degree corresponding with the extent of penitence in the heart of the worshipper. In the second part of the Absolution we beseech God "to give us true repentance," that repentance unto salvation which He alone can give, and "His Holy Spirit," that "the rest of our lives may be pure and holy, and that at last we may come to His eternal joy, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

The Rubric that follows the Absolution directs that here, and at the end of all other prayers, the people shall answer—Amen.

Amen is a Hebrew word, and according to our Catechism it means "So be it."

It is frequently used by our Saviour, and is translated by the words Verily, verily.

From St. Paul we learn that in the Apostolic age the people said "Amen" at the blessing and giving of thanks. (1 Cor. xiv. 16.)

And we find that the early Christians in their public services pronounced it so heartily that Jerome, an ancient writer and father, compares it to thunder. And another Father of the Church, Clement of Alexandria, says, "at the concluding acclamation of prayer, (meaning the Amen) they raised themselves upon their tiptoes, endeavouring as it were to lift up their bodies as well as their souls to heaven.

The Jews have a proverbial saying that the gate of Paradise is open to him who answers Amen with all his might. Of course we only wish the spirit, not too close an imitation of these examples, in our modern congregations.

We wish to hear the Amen pronounced at the end of every prayer, not, as it usually is, almost in a whisper, but solemnly and devoutly, and with a distinct and audible voice.

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*Of the Lord's Prayer.*

The first Prayer-book of King Edward VI. began with the Lord's Prayer.

Before the year 1549, the date of that book, the Priest used to repeat the Lord's Prayer to himself, so that the public service did not commence until he said, "O Lord, open Thou our lips," and the people replied, "And our mouth shall shew forth Thy praise."

But now the Rubric directs the minister kneeling to say the Lord's Prayer with an audible voice, and the people, also kneeling, are required to repeat it with him.

Kneeling is the only proper posture for prayer, as testifying humility; and it was the practice of religious persons in the Jewish Church, and also of the first Christians.

Thus King Solomon, at the dedication of his magnificent temple, knelt down upon his knees before all the congregation of Israel.

The Prophet Daniel knelt three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God.

In the same posture St. Peter prayed when he raised Dorcas from the dead.

And St. Paul, after exhorting the Elders of the Church at Ephesus, knelt down and prayed with

them all. St. Stephen, in the hour of his martyrdom, "kneeled down and prayed for his murderers, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

As for the present idle custom of sitting during prayer, it is a sight painful to behold, and one which cannot be too strongly condemned.

It is not a proper attitude for any who come before God to confess their sins past, and to implore pardon and grace for the time to come.

It is a fault which proceeds mostly from idleness or irreverence, or from the fear of spoiling clothes. Those who transgress in this particular, will do well to remember the words of that quaint old divine of our Church, George Herbert:

"When once thy foot enters the Church, be bare,  
God is more there than thou: for thou art there  
Only by His permission. Then beware,  
And make thyself all reverence and fear.  
Kneeling ne'er spoilt silk stockings; quit thy state,  
All equal are within the Church's gate."

In obedience to the commands of Christ, "When ye pray, say, Our Father, etc.," the early Church made the Lord's Prayer a part of all her holy offices; and so, following that primitive model, our Church has wisely inserted it in all her services.

That divine prayer has in every age been the admiration of the wise and learned; and through

its beautiful simplicity, and singular conciseness, it is easily understood by the poor and unlearned. It is so full and comprehensive, that it expresses all our wants; and so explicit, that the Fathers termed it "The Epitome of the Gospel."

The conclusion of the Prayer, commonly called the Doxology, or the form of ascribing glory to God, was only added at the last review of the Prayer-book in the year 1661.

It is not found in the form recorded in the Gospel of St. Luke, but it is received into the present editions of St. Matthew's Gospel, for it is inserted in the Syriac version of that Evangelist's writings. It was introduced into the ancient Greek Liturgies, and is known to have been commonly used by the Jews.

The Doxology seems to be taken from the prayer of King David, when he blessed the Lord before all the congregation, when the princes and people of Israel offered so liberally their gifts for the building of the Temple. Then the King said, "Blessed be Thou, Lord God of Israel, our Father for ever and ever. Thine, O God, is the greatness and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine. Thine is the Kingdom, O Lord,

and Thou art exalted as Head above all." (1 Chron. xxix. 10, 11.)

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*Of the Versicles between the Lord's Prayer and  
the Gloria Patri.*

The beautiful Prayer which our Saviour gave to His Apostles is followed by four versicles or short verses, which, from the people answering the Minister, are sometimes called reponses. These have been used from time immemorial in the Christian Church. They are to be found in most of the ancient Liturgies, and are taken from the Book of Psalms.

The first, "O Lord, open Thou our lips, and our mouths shall shew forth Thy praise," is from the Penitential 51st Psalm, in which David, whose lips had been almost sealed on account of his crimes of adultery and murder, could not fully confess his sins, and praise God, until it had pleased Him to open his lips. The second versicle and response, "O God, make speed to save us," "O Lord, make haste to help us," varies but little from the acclamation "Hosanna," used by the Jewish multitude when they led our Saviour in triumph to the Temple.



The signification of the word "Hosanna," being, "Save, Lord, we beseech Thee."

It is to be noted, that the worship of the Temple was performed by the Priests and Levites only, but now that the rites and ceremonies of Judaism are abolished, every follower of Christ is so far a priest as to be allowed to join in the spiritual sacrifice. By this manner of response a great variety is given to the Service, and people who might otherwise become listless and sleepy, may thus have their attention quickened, and their feelings of devotion strengthened.

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*Of the Hymn Gloria Patri.*

The Anthem which now follows is called "Gloria Patri," from its two first words signifying in Latin "Glory to the Father." It is sometimes called the Lesser Doxology, to distinguish it from that Angelic Anthem which is used in the Communion Service, "Glory be to God on High."

It is not only an admirable ascription of praise to God, but it is in itself a summary of the Christian Faith. For the whole of our religion depends on its leading doctrines, belief in God the Father,

God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; in other words the doctrine of the Trinity, the three Persons and yet but One God. The Gloria Patri is of most ancient date. It was in the early Church incorporated into all Public Services, Sermons and Homilies. In the story of the martyrdom of Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, "the Angel of the Church of Smyrna," mentioned in the Book of Revelation, the friend and disciple of St. John the Divine, we read that when the Bishop was bound to the stake, he lifted up his eyes to Heaven, and concluded the prayer in which he commended his soul to God with this Doxology, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost." The early Christians were precise in keeping to this form of words, for even in St. John's time that deadly heresy arose, which denied the Godhead of our Lord and Saviour, and which has ever since afflicted the Church, and is now called Unitarianism.

The first heretics tried to evade the orthodox doctrine, the very foundation of Christianity, by saying, "Glory be to the Father, through the Son, and in the Holy Ghost," thus denying each separate Person to be God.

At the time of the Council of Nice, which was summoned in the 4th century, this Doxology became the mark or criterion by which the orthodox

were distinguished from the sect of the Arians, who denied the divine nature of our Blessed Lord. And sometime after the Nicene Council the latter clause was added, "As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end."

This was to oppose the doctrine of the Arians, who in opposition to the plain declaration "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," dared to assert that Christ was but a created Being, and that there was a time when He did not exist.

So important does the Church of England consider this Doxology as a matter of faith, and as an ascription of Glory to the Holy and Undivided Trinity, that she has ordained that "at the end of every Psalm, of Benedicite, Benedictus, Magnificat, and Nunc Dimittis, Gloria Patri shall be repeated."

The Church Militant on earth thus following in the strain of that Hymn of Glory, which St. John, in the Book of Revelation, declares to be used by the Church Triumphant in Heaven. "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power. For Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created."

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*Of the Versicles after Gloria Patri.*

The first, *i.e.* the Penitential part of the Service, is here concluded. We now proceed to that portion which is called Eucharistic, *i.e.* the Service of Thanksgiving, and accordingly the Minister exhorts the people "Praise ye the Lord." This versicle is a literal translation of the Hebrew "Hallelujah." That word which is frequently used by St. John in the 19th of Revelation, and repeated by the Primitive Christians in their public and private devotions. In the first Prayer-book of King Edward VI., the Hallelujah was appointed to be sung here from Easter to Trinity Sunday. It was omitted in the second Book, but inserted again in the revision, which took place in Queen Elizabeth's reign. The response, "The Lord's Name be praised," was introduced into our Liturgy at its last review in 1661. It was taken from the Book of Common Prayer drawn up for the use of the Scotch Episcopalians, in the reign of Charles I.

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*Of the Venite Exultemus.*

The Psalm which now follows is called Venite, from the words of its commencement in the Latin

version, signifying "O come let us sing," etc. It was probably adopted from the Jewish Ritual, and is supposed to have been used in the Temple on the Day of Tabernacles.

It occurs in the most ancient Liturgies, and is wisely employed by our Church as preparatory to the other Psalms, Lessons, and Collects.

It exhorts us first to praise God in the consideration of His mighty power, by which He created this our world, and sustains it. Then we are urged to pray to Him as "the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand." Then we are cautioned by the example of Israel in the wilderness, against hardness of heart and contempt of His word and works.

On the 19th day of the month "the Venite" is not to be said or sung here, but in its proper place in the usual Morning Psalms.

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### *Of the Psalms.*

The Book of Psalms, or Psalter as it was anciently called, is a collection of Sacred Hymns, primarily composed for devotional use in the Jewish Church, and now, as being a work dic-

tated by the Holy Spirit of God, taken into the Service of the Christian Church. They are called the Psalms of David, as that King of Israel was the inspired author of the greater part of them.

In the record of his own times, David was styled "the sweet Psalmist of Israel."

Some portions of the Psalms were composed by other Authors, whose names are mentioned, as Asaph, Ethan, Heman, Moses, and Solomon.

The 150 Psalms, as far as their authorship is concerned, extend over the long period of six centuries. Most of David's Psalms, as we see by their titles, were committed to masters of music to be set to various tunes; and musical instruments were constantly used in the service of the Temple at Jerusalem. Thus we read in 2 Chron. vii. "The priests waited on their office; the Levites also with instruments of music of the Lord, which David the King had made to praise the Lord, because His mercy endureth for ever, when David praised by their ministry."

In the previous chapter it is said, "It came even to pass as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord, saying, For He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever, that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord; so

that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud, for the Glory of the Lord had filled the house."

When David brought the Ark of God to Mount Zion, we read of "the Levites which were the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren arrayed in white linen."

Here possibly is the origin of those surpliced choirs, who in all ages of Christianity have chanted the same Psalms of David in our great Cathedrals, and in many of our Parish Churches. When organs were introduced is not clearly known. We read that they were used by our Saxon and Norman forefathers, and it is recorded that about the year 766, the Emperor of Constantinople sent a present of an organ to Pepin, King of France. When we repeat the Psalms, we stand, thus showing by the erection of our bodies that we are lifting up our souls to God.

It is also agreeable to the practice of the Jewish Church, for it is said that "while the priests and Levites were offering up praises to God all Israel stood."

It is to be noted that the Psalms are divided into sixty portions, *i.e.*, one portion for every morning, and one for every evening service during the month.

The ancient practice of dividing them into seven portions for a week was much too long and tedious.

The Psalms which we use in our daily service are not taken from either of the two last translations of the Bible, but from the great English Bible, the first authorised edition, translated by Tyndale and Coverdale, and revised by Archbishop Cranmer, A.D. 1539.

The reason of this is that the Book of Common Prayer was compiled in the year 1548, before the two last translations of the Bible were in existence.

Of all the comments that have been written on the Book of Psalms, none are more excellent than those of Bishop Horne. "The Psalms (he says) are an epitome of the Bible, adapted to the purposes of devotion. They treat occasionally of the creation and formation of the world, the dispensations of Providence, and the economy of grace; the transactions of the Patriarchs; the exodus of the children of Israel; their journey through the Wilderness, and their settlement in Canaan; their law, priesthood, and ritual; the exploits of their great men, wrought through faith; their sins and captivities, their repentances and restorations; the sufferings and victories of David; the peaceful and happy reign of Solomon; the advent of Messiah,



with its effects and consequences ; His incarnation, birth, life, passion, death, resurrection, ascension, kingdom, and priesthood ; the effusion of the Spirit ; the conversion of the Gentiles ; the rejection of the Jews ; the establishment, increase, and perpetuity of the Christian Church."

"The end of the world, the general judgment, the condemnation of the wicked, and the final triumph of the righteous with their Lord and King."

These are the objects presented to our imaginations. We are instructed how to conceive them aright, and to express the different affections which when so conceived they must excite in our minds. They are for this purpose adorned with the figures, and set off with all the graces of poetry.

In the language of this divine book, the prayers of the Church have been offered up to the throne of grace from age to age ; and it appears to have been the manual of the Son of God in the days of His flesh, who at the conclusion of the last supper is generally supposed to have sung a hymn taken from it, and who pronounced upon the Cross the beginning of the twenty-second Psalm, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me ?" and expired, with a part of the thirty-first in His mouth, "Into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

*Of the Rubric concerning the Lessons.*

In the Rubric following the Psalms, it is said, "He that readeth is directed so to stand and turn himself as he may best be heard by all such as are present."

It is related in the fourth chapter of St. Luke, that when our Saviour read the Scripture in the synagogue at Nazareth, "He stood up for to read."

And therefore, now, because the reading of God's Word is an act of authority, the reader is to stand. For some time after the Reformation the officiating minister read the Morning and Evening Prayer as well as the Communion Service, in the chancel, near the communion table. That custom was found inconvenient for hearing, especially when many of our old parish churches were obstructed with high pews, which are now happily disappearing. As the clergyman's voice was so often impeded by these unseemly hindrances, for the accommodation both of ministers and people, the bishops in the reign of Queen Elizabeth dispensed with the practice of saying the prayers at the east end of the church. Then reading desks were erected in the body of the church, where the minister read Morning and Evening Prayer.

The custom became universal in the year 1603,

for one of the canons then contained the order that "a convenient seat be provided for the minister to read service in," this showing that there had not been one before in every church. There were generally speaking two desks provided, one for the Book of Common Prayer, and the other for the Bible. When the Lessons were read, the minister necessarily turned towards the people, so that he might "be best heard of all such as were present." The office of the Holy Communion continued as it now does, to be read in the chancel, and the minister is directed "to stand at the north side of the table."

There is another thing to be noticed in the Rubric. The first Lesson is to be taken out of the Old Testament, but no mention is made of the Apocrypha. Now we know that in the week-day service, chapters are read as lessons out of the Apocryphal Books, but never on Sundays. It is probable that the Reformers, considering that the Apocryphal Books were so few, did not think them worthy of any particular notice.

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### *Of the Lessons.*

At the beginning of the service in the exhortation, we are told that one design of our assembling

together in God's house is, "to hear His most Holy Word."

When our hearts have been raised to God by praising Him in the Psalms, it is fitting that we should listen to other portions of Scripture. Here follow, a hymn only coming between them, two Lessons, the first taken from the Old Testament, the second from the New.

The word "Testament" means will—the two Covenants of the Old and New Testaments, though they may differ in language, are in substance the same.

There is a great tendency in the present day to separate them altogether, and persons are apt to lay less stress, and to place less faith in the writings of the Old Testament than in those of the New.

Such persons lose sight of the fact that the Old Testament is introductory to the New.

Our Lord constantly appealed to "the Law of Moses and the Prophets," and declared that He "came not to destroy the Law" *i.e.*, the moral Law, "but to fulfil."

He recognized as Holy Scripture all that the Jewish people received, and His Apostles did the same. St. Paul, writing to the Galatians said, in

the third chapter of that Epistle, "The Law is our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ."

Our seventh Article also declares, "the Old Testament is not contrary to the New; for both in the Old and New Testaments, everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and man, being both God and man." No Christian man, whatsoever, is free from the obedience of the Commandments, which are called "moral."

"What is the law," (says Justin Martyr), "but the prediction of the Gospel? and what is the Gospel, but the Law prefigured?"

Chrysostom, another ancient Father of the Church, says, "Between the two Covenants, there is neither repugnance nor contrariety of opinion, the difference is merely verbal. Christ is announced by the Prophets; Christ is preached in the New Testament; the Old declared beforehand the things of the New, and the New interpreted those of the Old."

"Study the Holy Scripture, (says Mr. Locke), especially the New Testament; therein are contained the words of eternal life. It has God for its author; salvation for its end; truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter."

It is altogether wrong for people to describe the first part of the Scripture as the Bible, and the second part as the Testament. The two together make that one book, the Bible, a term from the Greek "biblos," meaning book, as being the book of all books—the inspired writing of God himself.

But though the Bible is one book, we must remember that it consists of many treatises, composed at different periods of the world, by very different authors, all alike, however, in one point, that they are inspired, and therefore infallible. "Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

The Books of the Old Testament are divided into three classes. (1) The Historical. (2) The Poetical. (3) The Prophetical. The historical part contains first, the Pentateuch, a word from the Greek meaning five volumes, the five books written by Moses. These writings, without which we should know nothing of the creation of the earth, of the fall of man, of the deluge, of the early history of the Patriarchs, and the Israelites, are the most ancient books in the world. Then we have the books of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth, the two books of Samuel, the two books of Kings, the two books of Chronicles, the books of Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther. The second division contains the book

of Job, the Psalms, the Proverbs, the Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. The Book of Job is of uncertain date, but of great antiquity. The other poetical books of the Bible were composed by David, and his son Solomon, the two most remarkable of the kings of Israel.

The Prophetical books include the writings of the four great Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. And also the composition of the twelve minor Prophets, ending with Malachi, when the voice of prophecy ceased for four hundred years, and was not revived till the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

The Prophetical books of the Bible contain God's warnings and threatenings of punishment against Israel, and other rebellious nations. They extend to the chosen people many invitations of mercy, and comfort them, as the Evangelical Prophet Isaiah especially did, with assurance of the perfect and glorious establishment of the reign of Messiah.

The whole of the Old Testament was originally composed in the Hebrew language, while the New was first written in Greek. That consists also of three species of writing: (1) The Historical. (2) The Epistolary. (3) The Prophetical.

The Historical are the writings of the Evange-

lists, the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

In this part of the New Testament we have principally the account of the life and ministry of our Blessed Redeemer, "Of His agony and bloody sweat, of His death and passion, of His glorious resurrection and ascension."

The Historical part also contains the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, in which its author St. Luke, "The beloved Physician," the faithful companion of St. Paul, gives the account of the foundation of the Christian Church, and the early propagation of the Gospel throughout the different nations of the earth.

The principal part of the Epistles were written by St. Paul, to the members of the various Churches which he had founded; one of them being established in Rome itself, where there were saints even in "Cæsar's household."

The remaining Epistles were composed by the Apostles, St. Peter, St. James, St. John, and St. Jude.

Some of them are called "general," because they were not addressed as all St. Paul's Epistles were, to particular Christian communities, but to the Church at large.



The last book of the New Testament, which may be called Prophetical, is the Book of the Revelation of St. John the Divine, in which he describes the vision he beheld of the eternal world, and of the Church Triumphant in Heaven, and in which he relates the many trials which await the Church Militant on earth, until through a long series of persecutions it will have its final consummation in glory.

The origin of publicly reading lessons in the Jewish Church, goes back to the time of Ezra and Nehemiah; when the Jews returned from their Babylonian captivity. On account of their long absence from the Holy Land, they had forgotten much of the religion of their forefathers, and it is said that "all the people gathered themselves together as one man, into the street, that was before the water-gate; and they spake unto Ezra the Scribe, to bring the book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel."

And Ezra the Scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose; and Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people (for he was above the people), and when he opened it, all the people stood up; and Ezra, "blessed the Lord, the Great God: and all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands, and they

bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord, with their faces to the ground."

And then we read of what seems to be the origin of preaching, or at least of expounding the Scriptures. It is said, "The Levites caused the people to understand the law, and the people stood in their place.

"So they read in the book in the law of God, distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading." (Nehemiah viii.)

No mention before the time of Ezra (B.C. 450) is made of any practice of publicly reading the law on the Sabbath day. About the time of the return from the Babylonian captivity, synagogues or places of public worship were first erected, and one was built in every place, where ten persons were of sufficient age to attend the service. From that time to the coming of Christ, who as we read in the Gospel was a constant attendant at the services of the synagogue, as well as of the temple, the custom of reading and expounding lessons from the Old Testament was regularly observed. The 13th chapter of the Acts tells us that the voices of Moses and the Prophets were heard in the synagogue every Sabbath day; and the Gospel of St. Luke says, that when our Lord Himself read

there a portion of Isaiah's writings, He applied the prophecy to Himself.

In the public congregations of the early Church the books of the Old Testament were read, and also those of the New Testament, as soon as they were written and published.

St. Paul charges the Thessalonians, that "this Epistle to them be read to all the holy brethren." (Chapter v.)

And to the Colossians, he writes, "After this Epistle is read amongst you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans." (Chap. iv.)

Justin gives us an interesting account of the mode in which public worship was conducted in the second century.

Speaking of that part of the service in which the lessons were read, he says, "On the day called Sunday, there is held a meeting in one place of all the people, whether they dwell in towns or in the country, and the writings of the Apostles and Prophets are read as far as time and opportunity permit. Then after the reader has finished, he that presides addresses a discourse to the people, in which he instructs them, and exhorts them to imitate the goodly things that have been read."

The lessons were usually followed in the early

Church by a homily or Sermon, the word "Homily," being taken from the Greek homilia, which signifies an instructive discourse. It was mostly delivered without a book, and contained an explanation of some of the passages of the Scripture which had been read in the services of the day. At the time of the Reformation, a calendar of lessons was drawn up; all superstitious legends which had been read in the Roman Catholic service were expunged, and nothing was ordained to be read on Sunday but the pure and inspired word of God, and it is so arranged that most parts of the Old Testament are read through once every year, and the books of the New read almost without exception three times every year.

In this our Church contrasts very favourably with the Church of Rome and other Christian denominations.

In the ritual of the former are indeed to be found certain portions of God's word, but they are so fragmentary and so scattered that it is impossible under that system to gain any comprehensive view of the Divine truth. In the latter, at least we may suppose one chapter of the Bible is read in each religious service, but then it is chosen without any order, and entirely at the will and pleasure of the Minister.

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*Of the Hymns after the Lessons.*

There is no Christian practice more delightful than that of praise, and the use of hymns is as old as the times of the Apostles. St. Paul in his Epistle to the Colossians, giving us the injunction, "teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in our hearts, unto the Lord."

That we may not want forms of praise, the Church has provided that both in her morning and evening prayer, a hymn should be used after the first lesson, and another after the second. After the first lesson of the morning service, we have the choice of two admirable hymns; the first of these from the three words at its beginning, meaning, when translated from the Latin, "We praise Thee, O God," is called the "Te Deum."

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*The Te Deum Laudamus.*

This is a hymn of very ancient date, and is supposed to have been composed by Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, at the baptism of St. Augustine, A.D. 386, since which time it has been daily repeated in the Church.

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Besides its use in the daily morning service, there has been a custom established of singing it as a triumphal hymn, on any great occasions of thanksgiving, such as victories in war, when the Sovereign has been accustomed to attend church in State, and *Te Deum* has been sung. It is also ordered in the forms of prayer to be used at sea, after victory or deliverance from an enemy.

When the Sovereign of England is crowned *Te Deum* is also sung.

It is to be noted, that the most ancient Christian music known as the Ambrosian *Te Deum*, is connected with this canticle, and is to be found in a work on music written in the fifth century. This excellent hymn is divided into three parts, each originally composed of ten versicles. The first part now consists only of nine, the versicles which were formerly the first and second now being united into one. The first part is an act of praise to the Father Everlasting, with a recognition of the doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity, implied in those words, "Holy, Holy, Holy," which the Prophet Isaiah heard the Seraphim sing, when he beheld the glory of Christ.

We are afraid that the generality of people have little or no idea of that title of God in which He is termed "The Lord God of Sabaoth."

“Sabaoth” is a Hebrew word, meaning armies or hosts. We are invited to join the angelic hosts with the Prophets, Apostles, and Martyrs, in praise to God, now that we are members of the Church Militant, in hope that we may one day become glorified members of the Church Triumphant. The second part of the hymn is a kind of confession of the leading doctrines of the Christian faith.

We acknowledge each person of the Holy Trinity to be equally the object of the Divine worship. We commemorate our Lord’s divine nature and eternal existence. His incarnation, *i.e.*, His taking our flesh, His sacrifice, ascension, and His sitting at the right hand of the Father. From that height of glory we believe that He, the Man Christ Jesus, will come to be our judge. We therefore naturally in the third part of the hymn turn our thanksgiving and confession into prayer, and conclude the hymn in the words of the Psalmist, expressing our hope, that as we have put our trust in the Lord we shall not eventually be confounded or ashamed.

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*Of the Hymn Benedicite.*

The next canticle is called Benedicite, from the words with which it begins in the Latin, "Benedicite, omnia opera," "O all ye works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord." It is also called the song of the three children, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, cast by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, into the burning fiery furnace, who are mentioned here by their Jewish names, Ananias, Azarias, and Misael. The hymn therefore is of Jewish origin, and is found in the writings of the Apocrypha, which the Church of England does not acknowledge to be inspired. The "Benedicite" was in the earliest days used in the services of the Church. St. Jerome, who lived in the fourth century, mentions that it was sung long before his time. The hymn corresponds very much with the 148th Psalm, both compositions calling on all creatures in the visible and invisible world to join in one general chorus of praise to the Almighty Creator.

In the first Prayer-book of King Edward VI., "Te Deum" was appointed daily throughout the year except in Lent, all which time in the place of "Te Deum," "Benedicite" was to be used.



The Rubric was altered in the second book, and since then the choice of the canticles has been left to the discretion of the Minister.

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*Hymns after the Second Lesson.*

After the Second Lesson in the Morning Prayer, two hymns are inserted, the choice of which is left to the Minister. The former of these is called "Benedictus," from the Latin word, meaning blessed, with which it begins. It is the prophetic hymn of Zacharias, at the circumcision of his son, John the Baptist, and it has been used for more than a thousand years in the service of the Church.

It is very appropriately introduced as a matter of thanksgiving to Almighty God, for the redemption of the world, by the incarnation of Jesus Christ, of whom John the Baptist was the Fore-runner.

For the sake of variety the 100th Psalm is inserted here, and is called from the words with which it begins in the Latin "Jubilate Deo."

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*The "Jubilate Deo."*

It formed part of the service of the Church as far back as the year 450, and was introduced into the second Prayer-book of King Edward VI.

It was originally composed by David on an occasion of public thanksgiving, and was usually sung when the Jewish priest entered into the Temple at the time of the sacrifice of the peace offering.

The Psalm is equally well suited to Christian worship, as it calls upon all, Gentile as well as Jew, to serve and praise God for His grace, mercy and truth.

One reason for placing this Psalm here, was that it might be a substitute for the "Benedictus," when that hymn occurs in the lesson or gospel, on the same principle that enjoins us to omit the "Venite" when it comes in the psalms of the day.

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*Of the Evening Hymns.*

After the First Lesson in the Evening Prayer, two hymns are provided, either of which may be used at the discretion of the Minister.

The one is called "The Magnificat," the other "Cantate Domino," from the words with which they begin in the Latin version.

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*The Magnificat or Song of the Blessed Virgin.*

The Magnificat is the first hymn recorded in the New Testament, and was sung in the Gallican Church at the morning service, A.D. 506.

Of all the hymns of Holy Scripture it is the most closely connected with our Blessed Lord, having been spoken by the Virgin Mary under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. It expresses praise and gratitude to God for His mercies vouchsafed to Mary as the Mother of our Lord; and more especially for the redemption of the world, as promised to the Patriarchs of whom Abraham is mentioned.

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*The Cantate Domino or Ninety-eighth Psalm.*

The "Cantate" was composed by David as a Psalm of thanksgiving for a victory. It goes however beyond the temporal advantage, and

praises God for the miraculous salvation He has worked for His people ; and it celebrates the righteousness, mercy and truth, of Him who is our Redeemer, and will one day be our Judge.

The "Cantate Domino," was added to the Liturgy in the second Prayer-book of King Edward VI.

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*Hymns after the Second Lesson.*

One of the hymns which follow is called "Nunc Dimittis," the other "Deus Misereatur," from their first words in the Latin.

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*Of "Nunc Dimittis," or the Song of Simeon.*

The author of the "Nunc Dimittis," was the aged Simeon, that just and devout man, who "waited for the consolation of Israel," to whom was revealed by the Holy Spirit, that he should not die till he had seen the Lord's Christ. When the infant Jesus was taken into the Temple, Simeon under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost

took Him up in his arms and blessed God in the words of this hymn.

This composition was in very early times used by Christians in their private devotions, and was frequently sung by saints and martyrs in the hour of their death. It is to be found in the Liturgies of the Greek, Roman, and Reformed Churches.

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*Deus Misereatur.*

The sixty-seventh Psalm was added to our service book in the year 1552. It praises God for the extension of the Gospel, and as Simeon offers thanksgiving for seeing the salvation of the Lord, so here David prays that "the light of His countenance may be shown to us, and His saving health known among all nations."

Thus looking forward to that blessed era, "when the fulness of Gentiles is come in," and the conversion of the Jews is completed. When "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

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*On the Apostles' Creed.*

It is the leading principle of our Church that "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation," but seeing that beside the fundamental truths of Christianity, the Bible expresses many things of less importance, it became necessary for the Church to frame a summary of belief which could be easily learnt and understood by its members.

This summary, containing the articles of our faith, is termed a Creed, from the Latin word "Credo," I believe. Such forms of faith in the Holy Scripture are very brief. Our Lord, we know, commanded His Apostles to baptize their converts "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," and probably such a confession as "I believe in the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost," was the only one required of candidates for Holy Baptism. We read that when Philip the Evangelist baptized the Ethiopian Eunuch, he demanded of him a still shorter profession of faith, that he believed that "Jesus was the Son of God."

It is probable that the Apostles and their immediate successors, used several forms of faith or creeds. The several Churches were allowed to

compose their own creeds, as they did their own liturgies, though they kept strictly to "the faith once delivered to the saints." As, however, heresies arose, more especially the Arian error, which, as denying the foundation of Christianity, the doctrine of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, the Creeds of the Church became more enlarged, and were intended to guard believers against false expositions of the Scripture.

The Creed which we use every Sunday in the Morning and Evening Prayer, is called "the Apostles' Creed," not because it was composed by the Apostles, but because it is of very ancient date, and is agreeable to the doctrines which the Apostles taught.

This Creed, very nearly in its present form, was used by the Church in the fourth century, and the substance of it is to be found in most of the writings of the early Fathers, even so far back as the time of Trendus, Bishop of Lyons, A.D. 180. The articles of our Lord's descent into hell, of the "Communion of saints," and of "the life everlasting," are not to be found in the most ancient Creeds.

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#### *The Creed of St. Athanasius.*

The Athanasian Creed, which is only read on certain Feast-days mentioned in the Rubric, is like

the Apostles', of uncertain date. Like the other confessions of faith, it is directed against the Arian error, which so greatly troubled the early Church. This Creed is by some supposed to have been composed by Athanasius, when he was at Rome; but by one of our greatest divines, Waterland, the composition of this Creed is attributed to Hilary, of Arles, who died A.D. 449. Some persons think that the condemning, or damnable clauses as they are called, are unduly strong and uncharitable, and they are apt so far to forget their proper behaviour in the house of God, as to sit down the moment the words "Whosoever will be saved, etc.," are uttered. Particular expressions in the Creed furnish the infidel and the scoffers with his sharpest weapons of attack, and have caused disquietude in the minds of some, who in the main are faithful Christians, and true Church people, and probably in some few cases this Creed has been a stumbling block in the way of those who think of entering the ministry.

Dr. Vaughan, writing on this point, aptly remarks, "You can never expect to find in a very ancient document an exactness of adaptation to the taste or feeling of a later age. Expressions which were perfectly intelligible to the writer, and to the first readers, may become difficult of explanation



when the clue to their meaning is lost by time. Other expressions which were justified at the time by a recent experience of the serious consequences of error, may sound harsh beyond what is necessary, when the errors to which they refer have passed into the dim back-ground of a remote antiquity ; or it may be, again, that a form of speech which was usual and natural in dealing with opponents in a distant age, is stronger and more condemnatory than the polished ear, or (let us believe) the charitable judgment of our own time can hear, or use with entire approbation. All these things may be, and yet the composition, which contains these drawbacks to its hearty acceptance with us, may be all the time true and valuable ; a needed protest against errors possible because once prevalent ; a sound summary of a faith once delivered to the saints, or a solemn warning against corruptions, by which that faith may be, because it has been, disfigured or mutilated." It is to be borne in mind that the Athanasian Creed does not profess to be an explanation of the mysterious doctrines of the Trinity, and of the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ ; but its object is to refute certain unscriptural perversions of those important truths.

It is also to be remarked, that the expressions objected to in the Creed have been translated in

rather a stronger sense than the Latin version justifies. For instance, the passage, "He therefore that will be saved, must thus think of the Trinity," might be more correctly rendered, "He who wishes to be saved, let him thus think of the Trinity."

The Creed in its damnatory clauses seems to repeat these declarations of Christ and His Apostles in other words, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved ; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." (Mark xvi. 16.)

"Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God : and this is the Spirit of Anti-Christ." (1 John iv. 3.)

"Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John v. 5.)

"There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." (2 Pet. ii. 1.)

Whatever allowance may hereafter be made for ignorance, prejudice, and other infirmities, is among the secret mysteries known only to God. The Gospels declare that unbelief will be followed by condemnation, and therefore the Church cannot be wrong in making the same assertion. The

Creed is placed in the most proper position in our service. Before it come the Lessons. "Faith cometh by hearing," and so we, having heard the Word of God, profess our belief in it.

And the Rubric directs that both minister and people are to repeat it, for it is the confession of every person present: and it is appointed to be said or sung by the minister and people standing. This was the attitude in which the early Christians always repeated it.

It implies a determination to defend the faith which we profess, and it is said, that formerly the nobles in Poland, when repeating the Creed, used to draw their swords, thus declaring their resolution to seal the truth, if need be, by their blood. When we come to the second Article of the Apostles' Creed, where the name of Jesus is mentioned, there is a general practice in our Churches to bow the head—it is an ancient and reverent custom, and is enjoined in the eighteenth Canon of our Church.

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*Of the Versicles between the Creed and the Lord's Prayer.*

The salutation of the minister and the answer of the people, "The Lord be with you," "And with

thy spirit," are taken from Holy Scripture. The former are the words of Boaz, addressed to his reapers, as related in the second chapter of the Book of Ruth. St. Paul also says, "The Lord be with you," and "The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit." (2 Thess. iii. 16; 2 Tim. iv. 2.) Then follow the words "Let us pray," by which the people are reminded of the solemn duty in which they are engaged, and that, therefore, they should not allow their minds to be distracted with wandering thoughts. This is in accordance with very ancient usage, and it is said that even in the heathen sacrifices, some one was appointed to call the people's attention to the act in which they were engaged. The three versicles which are then used, "Lord, have mercy upon us," "Christ, have mercy upon us," "Lord, have mercy upon us," are a short supplication to each person of the Holy Trinity, and have sometimes been termed the Lesser Litany.

This is of great antiquity, and is believed to have been handed down from the Apostles, and an old council orders it to be said three times in the public service. Having used this three-fold supplication, the minister, clerk, and people, are to say the "Lord's Prayer," with a loud voice, and

then before the minister begins to pray alone for the people, they are called upon to join with him in certain versicles, during the repetition of which the Rubric enjoins the Priest to stand. The intention of the Reformers seems to have been throughout the Prayer-book, that the Priest should kneel with the people in confession and penitential prayers, but stand as in the Communion Service while offering all other prayers.

The two first of these versicles, which are taken from the eighty-fifth Psalm, answer to the Sunday Collects, which mostly contain petitions for mercy and salvation. The two next from the twentieth Psalm, answers to the prayers for the Sovereign and the Royal Family. The two following, from the one hundred and thirty-second Psalm, "Endue thy ministers with righteousness, and make Thy chosen people joyful," were part of the Jewish Liturgy, and were offered by King Solomon at the dedication of the Temple.

These, with the petitions, "O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance," answer the Collect for the clergy and the people.

The two next, "Give peace in our time, O Lord," "Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only Thou, O God," answer the daily Collects for peace; and the last, "O God, make clean our

hearts within us," and "Take not Thy Holy Spirit from us," answer the daily Collects for grace.

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*Of the Collects.*

The word "Collect," most probably means, a "collection" of prayers taken out of Holy Scripture, and the name is more especially given to the prayer placed before the Epistle and Gospel of each Sunday. The Collects are generally addressed to the first person of the Holy Trinity, agreeably to our Lord's injunction, "When ye pray, say, Our Father, etc.," and they always conclude "Through Jesus Christ our Lord," with the exception of the prayer of St. Chrysostom at the end of the Morning and Evening Service, which is addressed to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

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*Of the Collects for Morning and Evening Prayer.*

The first Collects, both at Morning and Evening Prayer are the same, viz., the Collects for the day. The second Collect at Morning Prayer is one "for peace."

It is of very ancient date, and is taken out of the

Communion office of Gregory the Great; since which period, viz., for more than one thousand two hundred years it has been offered in the service of the English Church. It is a prayer for the peace of the Church militant, or engaged in warfare here on earth, for its unity and concord. Peace was the first legacy which our dying Redeemer bequeathed to His disciples, viz., the Gospel itself, which is "Peace on earth, good will towards men."

And that the world and the Church might enjoy peace, was one of the prayers of the early Christians. They prayed, it is said, not only for unity and concord in their own body, but for the peace and health of the heathen people among whom they lived. And so remarkably was at least the first part of their prayer answered, that the heathen were compelled to exclaim, "See how these Christians love one another."

The third Collect for the Morning Prayer is called a Collect for grace—grace and peace which are joined together in the Bible, are not separated in the services of the Church of England, for she knows that without grace, or God's strength to resist our spiritual enemies, there can be no peace either for this world or the next. In this Collect we declare our dependence on Almighty God for

power to defend us, so that in the midst of temptation we may not fall into sin, but may perform those good works which, as evidences of our faith, are well-pleasing in His sight. With this prayer, which like the one preceding it was taken from the Communion Office of Gregory, the order for Morning Prayer ended, from its first appearance in 1549, to its last review in 1661. Till the latter period the prayers that follow were placed near the end of the Litany, immediately after "We humbly beseech Thee, O Lord." The second Collect for Evening Prayer, like the second one for Morning Prayer, is also termed "a Collect for Peace." It is translated from the Communion Office of Gregory, and varies more in expression than in meaning from the one that precedes it. In the former we more especially pray against the assaults of our enemies from without, against those troubles to which we are subject in our intercourse with the world. In the latter we pray for peace within our hearts, "that peace which the world cannot give."

So that each of us may in the evening say with David, "I will lay me down in peace, and take my rest; for Thou only makest me dwell in safety."

The third Collect for Evening Prayer also bears a resemblance to the third used in Morning



Prayer. In the morning we pray against the danger and temptations to which we may be exposed during the day. In the evening we pray to God "to lighten our darkness," *i.e.* to enlighten the eyes of our understanding, that we sleep not in our sins unto death, and "to defend us from all perils and dangers of the night." The prayer is taken almost literally from that great storehouse of prayer and praise, the Book of Psalms. There is a great similarity between this short Collect, and some passages in the Psalms. With this Collect the Evening Prayer ended till the last review.

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*Of the Anthem.*

After the third Collect, both in Morning and Evening Prayer, the Rubric directs that "In Quires and places where they sing, here followeth the Anthem."

Anthems are mostly sung in Cathedrals and Collegiate Churches, where well-trained choirs are provided; but in most of our Parish Churches, at this part of the service, a Psalm or Hymn is sung, and it is ordered here, no doubt, for the purposes of variety, and giving relief to the congregation.

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*A Prayer for the Queen's Majesty.*

The prayer for the Sovereign, as well as the four others which follow, was inserted here at the last review of the book in 1661. In all ages, and in all places, it has ever been the custom of the Church to follow the injunction of St. Paul, conveyed to Timothy, (2nd chapter, 1st Epistle): "I exhort, therefore, that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men, for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."

Even the very heathen used to offer sacrifices and prayers for their princes and rulers, and so did the Jews, as we gather from the Book of Psalms. The early Christians, too, as we learn from the writings of Tertullian, made prayers and intercessions for the Roman Emperors, and other rulers, part of their public devotions, even when those great ones of the earth were enemies to the faith and persecutors of the Christian religion.

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*Of the Prayer for the Royal Family.*

A prayer for the Royal Family was added to the Liturgy in the reign of James I., before whom no

Protestant sovereign had any issue. The form was then not quite the same as the present one, which was inserted in the reign of Charles I.

The original prayer ran as follows:—"Almighty God, which hast promised to be a Father to Thine elect and their seed, we humbly beseech Thee to bless our noble Prince Charles, Frederick the Prince Elector Palatine, and the Lady Elizabeth, his wife; endue them with Thy Holy Spirit, enrich them with Thy heavenly grace, prosper them with all happiness, and bring them to Thine everlasting kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

We may here remark that in the Book of Ezra, (10th chapter, 10th verse) King Darius, when making a decree for the building of the Jewish Temple, gave large presents to the Elders of the Jews, "that they might offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the King and of his Sons."

The old Romans prayed for the heirs of the empire, as well as for the reigning sovereign; and the writings of Basil and Chrysostom tell us that it was a part of the service of the Primitive Christians to pray "for the Emperor and all the Imperial Family."

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*Prayer for the Clergy and People.*

The next prayer is of very ancient date, and is found in the service-books as far back as the fourteenth century.

It was inserted in the first authorized English Litany in the year 1544, and was placed where it now is in our Prayer-book in 1661.

Having prayed for our Sovereign and the Royal Family, we are instructed to offer our petitions for the whole Christian world, who are described as "Bishops and Curates, and all Congregations committed to their charge."

The Bishops, as their name in the Greek denotes, are the overseers of the Church, and it is their weighty office to promote its peace and welfare, and according to their consecration vows, "to preach the Word, to minister godly discipline, to banish erroneous doctrines, and as far as their ability extends, to correct and punish public crimes." They only have the power of choosing and ordaining ministers: how great need then have they of the prayers of the faithful, "that they may lay hands suddenly on no man, but faithfully and wisely make choice of fit persons to serve in the sacred ministry of the Church."

That they may also have wisdom and prudence

piously to perform all the other duties of their high station, and act always in such a way as may conduce to the interests both of Church and State.

After the Bishops we pray for Curates. By that term is meant all other ministers who have the cure of souls, whether priests or deacons, whether rectors, or vicars, or those who are more generally called curates, who assist the beneficed clergy in performing the duties of their parishes. When we reflect on the responsibility and importance of their sacred office, that they are ordained to catechise the young, to instruct the ignorant, to reprove the vicious, to encourage the faithful, to relieve the distressed, to comfort the afflicted, to visit the sick, to lead the prayers of the congregation, to administer the Holy Sacraments, to preach God's Word, and to perform other rites and ordinances of the Church : that they are also to exhibit themselves as patterns of all Christian graces and virtues, we need no further proof to induce us to pray for the clergy, for without the grace of God all their labours and preaching will be unprofitable and vain.

St. Paul himself, writing to his Ephesian converts, begged them "to pray for him, that utterance might be given unto him to make known the

mystery of the Gospel." (Ephesians vi. 19.) And though he was so successful in spreading Christianity throughout the Gentile world, he frankly confessed, "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God giveth the increase." (1 Cor. iii. 6.)

And we pray not only for the higher and inferior ministers of the Church, that they may have "the healthful Spirit of God's grace," but that the same may be "the case with all congregations committed to their charge."

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### *The Prayer of St. Chrysostom.*

The concluding prayer is so called because it is taken out of a Greek Liturgy, ascribed to Chrysostom, an ancient Father of the Church.

It was first placed at the end of the English Litany, revised and set forth by Archbishop Cranmer. It is inserted in this part of our service at the last revision of the Prayer-book in 1661. It is fit that at the end of Morning and Evening Prayer, we should reflect on all the requests we have made, and urge the infallible promise of Him who, when on earth, declared that "where two or three are gathered together, He is in the midst of them."

And as we may have asked for something which He may not think convenient to grant us, we do not presumptuously desire that He should give us all that we have prayed for, but only request that He will fulfil our desires and petitions, "as may be most expedient for us," and that He will grant us those two things for which we cannot too importunately pray, "knowledge of His truth in this world, and in the world to come life everlasting."

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*The Benediction.*

It was the custom in the Jewish Church for the priest to dismiss the congregation with a final blessing. The form of it is recorded at the end of the sixth chapter of Numbers. "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron and his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The Lord bless thee, and keep thee, the Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."

The reason why this benediction was changed for the one in present use, taken from St. Paul's second Epistle to the Corinthians, was undoubtedly owing to the clearer revelation the Christian

Church has received on the doctrine of the Trinity.

The use of this Apostolic benediction is of great antiquity, and as it is a prayer as well as a blessing, no alteration in the posture of the minister is ordered. He is to pronounce it kneeling, and so to include himself as well as the rest of congregation.

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### *Of the Litany.*

The Greek word *Litaneia* means a prayer, or general supplication, and so it was understood by the heathens when in adverse times they offered public prayers to their gods.

The word has been adopted by the Christian Church, and denotes a general form of supplication to Almighty God when His wrath lies heavy upon us for our sins. Such a kind of supplication was the fifty-first Psalm, which has been termed David's Litany, and such was the Litany appointed by God Himself in the Book of Joel, when the congregation of Israel was to be assembled, and the priests were "to weep between the porch and the altar, and to say, Spare Thy people, O Lord." The form in which the Litany is now used, viz., that of the minister making request, and the people



answering thereto, is a very ancient one. We read of the custom existing in the fourth century, when Litanies were often sung in processions.

Our present Litany was probably compiled in the year 1549, from ancient sources, by Archbishop Cranmer, and was placed in the first Prayer-book of Edward VI. It was then ordered to be said or sung on Wednesdays and Fridays, and was printed after the Communion Service.

In the year 1552 it was inserted in its present place, and ordered to be used "on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and at other times, when it shall be commanded by the Ordinary."

The Litany commences with an address to each Person of the Holy Trinity, and then to them altogether. Having confessed ourselves to be miserable sinners, and on that plea having asked for mercy, we pray the good Lord to deliver us from many kinds of sins which are specified, and especially from fornication and all other deadly sin.

This term "deadly" has been objected to more than once, and the Puritan Divines, at the Savoy Conference, wished to alter the word, and suggested "grievous" in its place, observing at the same time that "the wages of sin, as such, were death." The Bishops answered, for that very reason "deadly" is the better word. We understand the term to

refer to all wilful and deliberate sin. What the Psalmist calls "presumptuous sins," which are much more heinous in their nature than sins of infirmity.

Among other petitions we pray against sudden death. The Puritans objected to this, urging that the godly should always be prepared to die.

They proposed to insert instead, the petition, "From dying suddenly and unprepared."

The Bishops replied, "from sudden death," is as good as "from dying suddenly," against which we therefore pray that we may not be unprepared.

After the petition "From all sedition, privy conspiracy, etc.," in the first Reformed Liturgy, the words were inserted, "From the tyranny of the Bishop of Rome, and all his detestable enormities, good Lord, deliver us," but they were removed in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

The petitions against rebellion and schism were added in the reign of Charles II., the revisers having no doubt in their minds the troubles of the preceding reign, when the Church and State were for a time subverted. In order that we may be delivered from such grievous evil, the Church beseeches the good Lord by all the mysteries of His incarnation, *i.e.*, by His taking our human

nature—by His Nativity, *i.e.* by His birth, by His circumcision, baptism, and temptation, and also by the great events of His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension, and by the coming of the Holy Ghost.

Then in accordance with St. Paul's injunction, "to make intercession for all men," follow petitions for the Church Universal; for the Sovereign, that she may evermore have affiance, *i.e.*, put her trust in the Lord; for the Royal Family; for Bishops Priests, and Deacons; for the Lords of the Council, and all the nobility; for Magistrates, and all God's people. Many other petitions are urged, and having prayed also for our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers, we beseech God to preserve to our use the kindly fruits of the earth. The word "kindly" means natural fruits produced after their kind.

Then having prayed for true repentance, forgiveness of sins, and amendment of life, we call upon our Saviour, and beseech Him to hear us by His Divinity: "Son of God, we beseech Thee to hear us."

And then we call upon Him by His humanity, by His sufferings for us: "O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world;" and, lastly, we beg of Him as the Lord Christ, our Anointed Mediator, to hear us, and to have mercy upon us.

Then follows the second part of the Litany, with the Lord's Prayer, and other prayers, and the Doxology, or ascribing glory to the Holy Trinity in imitation of the Psalmist, who in the midst of his supplications would often break out in an act of praise to God.

The Litany concludes with the prayer of St. Chrysostom, and with the thirteenth verse of the second Epistle to the Corinthians, which was added in the year 1558.

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*Prayers and Thanksgivings upon several Occasions.*

It is the remark of an eminent writer (Paley) that the enumeration of human wants and sufferings in the Litany is nearly complete, that "a Christian can have few things to ask of God, or to deprecate, which he will not find there expressed, and for the most part with inimitable tenderness and simplicity." The Church, however, hath thought good to enlarge our petitions in such instances, especially when there is some national calamity so prevalent, or some blessing so necessary, that it may be proper to pray against the one, and to supplicate the other with more than ordinary importunity. Drought, excessive rain, famine,

war, and pestilence, are among the most dreadful visitations of the Almighty; and He sometimes sends these judgments on the earth that the inhabitants of the world may learn righteousness. When King Solomon dedicated the Temple, and offered that famous prayer which is recorded in the eighth chapter of first of Kings, he supposed that there would be periods in the Jewish history when special prayers would have to be offered on account of war, drought, pestilence, and famine. And so on these extraordinary occasions it has ever been the custom of the Christian Church to offer extraordinary petitions. Of these occasional prayers, the first two, viz., the one "for rain," and the other for "fair weather," were inserted among the Collects at the end of the Communion Service in the first Prayer-book of King Edward VI. The next four were added in 1552, viz., the two "in time of dearth," and those "in time of war," and "in plague and sickness," and were placed at the end of the Litany.

Thanksgivings corresponding with them were added in 1604, and the whole prayers and thanksgivings were inserted in their present place in the year 1661.

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*Of the Prayers in the Ember Weeks.*

The origin of the word "Ember" is quite uncertain. Some have supposed that it means ashes, and others abstinence. We know that on fast-days in the early Church it was customary to sprinkle ashes on the head. The Ember weeks in ancient times were called the fasts of the four seasons, and it was ordered that at those seasons only should "deacons and ministers be made and ordained." The Ember Collects are a witness before God and men of the interest the whole Church has in those men who are to be ordained "to serve in its sacred ministry." How needful is it for all to pray that God will "guide the minds of His servants, the Bishops and pastors of His flock, that they will lay hands suddenly on no man, but make choice of fit persons."

The account of the first ordination after our Lord's ascension was that of Matthias to the apostolic office in the place of the traitor Judas. And then it is said of the members of the Church waiting for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Jerusalem, "all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication."

They appointed two, Joseph, called Barsabas,

who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias ; and they prayed and said, "Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two Thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas, by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place ; and they gave forth their lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the Eleven Apostles."

The Collects for Ember weeks were added to our Liturgy at its last review in 1661 ; and the first of them, which is a most beautiful and striking prayer, not to be excelled by any ancient composition, is supposed to have been written by Cosins, Bishop of Durham.

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*Of the Prayer that may be used after any of the  
Former.*

The occasional prayer, which is, perhaps, not used so much as its excellence deserves, is very suitable, not only for the public service of the Church, but for private devotion. It ought especially to be offered in seasons of penitence and humiliation, and also at the bedside of sick persons. The prayer is of very great antiquity, and dates

back as far as the fourth century. It was inserted in our Liturgy in the year 1544.

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*Prayer for the High Court of Parliament.*

In old times our Saxon and Norman Kings ruled their dominions mostly according to their own will, without the advice of their subjects. In course of time, however, they assembled a great council of Bishops and Barons, who formed the House of Lords to represent the nobility and the Church. In the reign of Henry III., through the instrumentality of the famous Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, the House of Commons was founded, and the knights of the shire were sent to represent the counties, and burgesses to represent the boroughs.

These together form the High Court of Parliament; and as they have such arduous matters to settle connected with the government of the country and the welfare of the Church, it is fitting that during the session we should offer our public prayers for their success.

It is to be noted that the prayer is for the High Court of Parliament, "*under* our most religious and gracious Queen." The Sovereign is generally



supposed to be one of the three estates of the realm; but that was not the case in older times, as is shown in the Form of Prayer for the 5th of November, which has only lately been removed from the Prayer-book. There God is praised for "happy deliverance of the King, and the three estates of the realm," which three estates in the first Collect of that service are shown to be the "Nobility, Clergy, and Commons of this realm."

The term "most religious and gracious," as applied to the Sovereign, means that from the dignity and sacredness of the office, she should be highly revered. Just as we read in the writings of one of the old Fathers, "Let us pray for the safety of the most religious Augustus Constantius; and all the people immediately cried out, Christ, help Constantius."

. The Prayer for the High Court of Parliament is of comparative modern date, and was added to our service during the last review; and Archbishop Laud is supposed to have been its author, before he was promoted to the See of Canterbury.

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*Of the Prayer for all Conditions of Men.*

St. Paul exhorts us "to make prayers and supplication for all men," and this duty was carefully regarded by the early Christians in their daily public devotions.

Till the last review the Church had no general intercessions for all sorts and conditions of men, except when the Litany was used. This Collect, therefore, was composed, and as the Rubric tells us, was ordered "to be used at such times when the Litany is not appointed to be said."

In this Prayer we address Almighty God as the common "Creator and Preserver of all mankind," and we beseech Him so to extend His Gospel that "His ways may be known unto them, and His saving health among all nations."

This is in fact a missionary prayer that all Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics, may be converted; but more especially we pray for the good estate, the well-being of the Catholic, or Universal Church, i.e., the whole body of Christ's followers spread throughout the world, that they may "hold the faith once delivered to the saints," "in unity of Spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life."

Towards the end of the prayer there is a special clause provided when any desire the prayers of the congregation. The use of it does not seem to be limited to those who are afflicted with sickness, but it is intended for all those who are "any ways afflicted or distressed in mind, body, or estate."

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*Of the Thanksgivings.*

The thanksgivings were all placed where they now stand in the year 1661. Praise for mercies received is one of the most important parts of God's public worship. A great part of our Liturgy is made up of it, as when we use the "Gloria Patri," and the Psalms. The form of "General Thanksgiving" is wisely appointed to be used in the Morning and Evening Prayer of every day just before the two concluding prayers, and a special clause is also inserted for those who, having had the benefit of the Church, desire to offer up their praises and thanksgivings for late mercies vouchsafed to them. Other particular thanksgivings being sometimes required, there are forms supplied for deliverance from drought, rain, famine, war, tumult, and pestilence.

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*Of the Sunday and Holy-days, and their several Collects, Epistles, and Gospels.*

The number of Collects in the Prayer-book is eighty-three. Most of them are of great antiquity, with the exception of that for St. Andrew's-day, which was added in the year 1552, and four others in 1661. Certain portions of Scripture selected from the New Testament, from the Epistles and Gospels, illustrating the two great divisions of the Christian year, from Advent to Trinity, and from Trinity to Advent, are read after each Collect on every Sunday and Holy-day.

There is a special bearing in each Gospel and Epistle on the day for which they are appointed.

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*Of the Weekly Festival, Sunday, or the Lord's Day.*

At the very beginning of the world the hallowing, or keeping sacred one day out of seven, was ordained by God Himself when He rested from His great work of Creation. In memory of that the Jews were accustomed to keep Saturday, the seventh day, as their Sabbath. Our Lord "came not to destroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfil." Therefore the fourth and the other com-

mandments of the Moral Law which were given to Israel at Sinai, are equally binding on Christians. Only the Sabbath has been altered in the Christian Church from the seventh to the first day of the week in commemoration of our Saviour's resurrection. Thus in the Apostolic age we find St. Paul preaching to the disciples at Troas "upon the first day of the week, when they came together to break bread," *i.e.* to partake of the "Holy Communion." To the members of the Church at Corinth the same Apostle writes, "Concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one lay by him in store as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." The name of the "Lord's Day," as applied to the Sunday, is as old as the Church itself. St. John, in the Book of Revelation, speaks of being "in the Spirit on the Lord's day."

If we turn to the early Christian writers we find Ignatius, who was probably the companion of the last of the Apostles, St. John, writing, "the Lord's Day festival, viz., the Resurrection Day, the Queen and Empress of days."

Irenæus, who wrote about seventy years after St. John's death, says, "On the Lord's Day we Christians keep the Sabbath."

Beside the weekly festival of the Lord's Day, the early Christians set apart certain days in the year to commemorate the more striking acts of our Redeemer's life, death, and ministry, viz., His nativity, His circumcision, Epiphany or manifestation to the Gentiles, His presentation in the Temple, His fasting, passion, resurrection, and ascension, His sending the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, and also the manifestation of the holy and undivided Trinity. And beside these solemn festivals, the early Christians had their special days on which they commemorated the blessed Apostles and Martyrs ; at whose graves they met once a year, not indeed to worship the departed, but to celebrate their virtues, to bless God for their saintly lives and glorious deaths, and to ask Him to grant them grace to imitate their patience and their heroism, and their faithfulness even unto death.

In lapse of time these commemorations became too numerous and burdensome, and even superstitious. And so our Church wisely, at the Reformation, resolved to retain no Saint's day festivals, except such as were dedicated to the honour of Christ and His Apostles, and to those whose names were eminent in the Gospels. Certain days of fasting and abstinence have also been appointed to express our sorrow and penitence for sin. This is

in harmony with what we read in the Old Testament, when the Prophet Jonah preached to Nineveh, and its king proclaimed a fast, and so averted the destruction of the city. We read also of the Jews being continually called upon by their prophets to fasting and humiliation. And in the New Testament our Blessed Lord connects fasting with almsgiving and prayer. He excused, indeed, His own disciples from fasting as long He, the Bridegroom, was with them. "But (said He) the days will come when the Bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast." Accordingly we read, that after His ascension, the Apostles practised this duty, and so did their successors in the early ages of the Church, especially in the penitential season of Lent.

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*Of the Sundays and Holy-Days. The Season of Advent.*

Advent is a Latin word, signifying "coming." It is the name applied to the season which commences the Ecclesiastical year, and which immediately precedes Christmas Day.

It commemorates a two-fold advent: the first coming of our Lord in the flesh to be our Saviour; His second coming at the end of time to be our

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Judge. In very ancient times the season of Advent was observed as one to be devoted to special prayer and discipline.

The Collects for the first and second Sundays in Advent were made new in the year 1549, and inserted in the first Prayer-book of Edward VI.

That for the third Sunday, which we may remark is very suitable, not merely for the season which commemorates the Judgment, but for the Ember-week, in which persons are ordained to the ministry of the Church, was added at the time of the Restoration, in place of a shorter Collect, which was not so suitable, and which ran as follows: "Lord, we beseech Thee, give ear to our prayers, and by Thy gracious visitation lighten the darkness of our hearts by our Lord Jesus Christ."

The Collect for the fourth Sunday is to be found in most of the ancient offices, though it was in some of them appointed to be used on the first Sunday in Advent. The Epistles and Gospels for these several Sundays are very suitable to the season. They declare to us the truth of our Redeemer's first coming, of the signs which are to precede and herald in His second appearance as a Judge. They show us that "that through patience and comfort of the Scriptures," we may have hope. They warn us that "we must cast away



the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light," if we wish to stand with confidence before the Son of Man, "when He arises to shake terribly the earth," and "to execute vengeance on all those who obey not the Gospel."

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### *Of Christmas Day.*

The Feast of the Nativity, or Birth of Christ, is supposed to have been kept in the Apostolic age. St. Chrysostom speaks in a Christmas homily of the fourth century of the Feast being then of ancient date. He styles it "Of all festivals the most venerable; the mother and metropolis of the rest." It is most fit that the season ushered in by a multitude of the heavenly hosts, and by their joyful songs, should in every age be observed as a time of festive gladness both in the Church, and in the Christian's social life.

For it was by our Redeemer's birth and death that heaven and earth were reconciled. And so the Lessons, Epistle, and Gospel of the day, like the angel, brings us "glad tidings of great joy," and declare that "Unto us is born a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." The appropriate Psalms for the day teach us how to praise God

for all the things we now commemorate, and to sing with the heavenly host, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill towards men."

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*St. Stephen's Day.*

Nothing is known of the Church's first holy Martyr, St. Stephen, before his conversion to Christianity. In the 6th and 7th chapters of the Acts of the Apostles we have an account given of his election to the office of a deacon. He was one of the seven who were appointed to superintend the temporal affairs of the faithful, and to fulfil the lower ministerial functions, and he is spoken of as "a man full of faith and of power and of the Holy Ghost," and "he did great wonders and miracles among the people."

His enemies among Jews (whose history and many perverse rebellions and resisting of the Holy Ghost he recounted before the Council), upon his declaring that he beheld "the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God, cried out with a loud voice, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him." The dying words of St. Stephen form a parallel

to those which were offered by his Divine Master on the Cross, who said: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,"—"Into Thy hands I commend my Spirit." For, Stephen said, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge,"—"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." It is to be noted, that St. Stephen's last prayer was wonderfully answered in at least one respect, for there was a young man present at that cruel martyrdom whose name was Saul, at whose feet "the witnesses laid down their clothes." We read that soon after he was converted to the faith, and as the most eminent of the Apostles—St. Paul—he became a foremost minister of the Church which he once persecuted, and the zealous preacher of that very Gospel which before he laboured to destroy. Among the works of Chrysostom and Gregory of Nazianzum are homilies or discourses in memory of St. Stephen's martyrdom, and this shows us at what an early date this Saint's day was kept in the Church.

The former of those fathers, in allusion to Stephen's name, which in the Greek means "crown," calls him "the crown of the Church," and the latter speaks of him as "the great Stephen whose temples were bound with the crown of martyrdom."

*St. John the Evangelist's Day.*

St. John was our Lord's best beloved disciple. He was one of the sons of Zebedee and Salome, and was born at Bethsaida on the Lake of Galilee, and pursued his father's trade of fishing, and was early called by our Lord to be a fisher of men. He with three other of the apostles,—James the Great, James the Less, and Joses—was a near relation of the Virgin Mary. And it was to the care of St. John the Evangelist that the Saviour committed His mother on the Cross; and He showed His peculiar love for him by allowing him to recline on His breast at supper.

After the death of the Virgin Mary, which is supposed to have happened in the year 48, St. John having twice suffered imprisonment in Jerusalem, travelled in Asia Minor, and was probably the founder of the Seven Churches which he mentions in the Book of Revelation. From Ephesus (where it is said a poisoned cup of wine was given him which did him no harm according to the promise given to the apostles, that if they drank of any deadly thing it should not hurt them) he was summoned to Rome. The Emperor Domitian, the last of the twelve Cæsars, was then on the throne of the world, and the

tradition says that he commanded the Apostle to be thrown into a caldron of boiling oil, and that he was miraculously preserved.

After this, "for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus," he was banished to the Isle of Patmos, where the visions of the future world were revealed to him, and where the Book of Revelation was written. When his work was done there, it is supposed that he was allowed by the Emperor Nerva (A.D. 96) to return to Ephesus, where he published his gospel, and where he died, having survived the rest of the apostles, at the very advanced age of a hundred years. It is to be noted that as St. John the Baptist, the son of Zacharias the last Prophet of the old dispensation, was the fore-runner of the Lord, and the herald of His first Advent; so St. John the Evangelist, the Prophet of the new dispensation and the writer of the last book of the New Testament, is the herald of Christ's second Advent,—and so his festival is with good reason closely connected with Christmas Day.

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*The Innocents' Day.*

The Holy Innocents, the children of Bethlehem, slain by the order of the cruel Herod soon after our Saviour's birth, have always been regarded by the Church as martyrs.

The festival is mentioned by Trendus who was himself a martyr (A.D. 202), and also by Cyprian and Origen. Here we may remark that there are three kinds of martyrdom. The first, both in will and deed, which St. Stephen suffered. The second, in will but not in deed. This was the case with St. John the Evangelist, who was miraculously delivered both from prison and from death. The third kind of martyrdom is the one in deed but not in will, and this was the case with the Holy Innocents. The Gospel of the day gives an account of their massacre, an event which is related not only in the Bible but in Roman history.

“Not in speaking but in dying, says an ancient Collect, have they confessed Christ.”

The passage from the Book of Revelation read for the Epistle, describes the happy condition of the redeemed and of the Innocents in heaven. And this confirms the words to be found at the

end of the Service for the Baptism of Infants :  
 "It is certain by God's Word that children that  
 are baptized dying before they commit actual sin  
 are undoubtedly saved."

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*Of the Sunday after Christmas Day.*

The Collect for the Sunday after Christmas is  
 the same as the one used on Christmas Day,  
 though the Epistle and Gospel are different, the  
 former showing the superiority of the Christian to  
 the Jewish dispensation, the latter relating some of  
 the circumstances which attended the birth of  
 Christ,

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*Of the Circumcision.*

Circumcision was a ceremony observed both by  
 the Jews and the heathens, and it is not unknown  
 among the heathens of the present day. Whether  
 it was at first a human or a Divine institution is  
 unknown, but it is certain that the Almighty  
 commanded Abraham, the Father of the faithful,  
 to circumcise his son Isaac: and ever after it was  
 the custom of the Jews to admit their male

children into the Church by the rite of circumcision on the eighth day after birth.

The Feast of the Circumcision is not of very remote antiquity; and the first mention we find of its observance is in the writings of the eleventh century. It falls upon the first of January, on which day the old heathen used to keep what was called the Saturnalia, which feast was always attended with much riot and immorality. By the order of one of the Councils, the members of the Christian Church were forbidden to attend those licentious gatherings of the heathen, on pain of excommunication. New Year's Day was not observed as such by the Church, though it received a sanctity from its connection with the Festival of the Circumcision of Christ.

That event declares that our Redeemer fulfilled all righteousness, and so relieved us from the severe injunctions of the Mosaic Law, and put us under the easier terms and obligations of the Gospel. The proper services are very suitable to the day. The first Lesson for the Morning relates the origin of the rite of Circumcision in the command given to Abraham, and the second states the necessity of spiritual circumcision. The Gospel gives an account of the Circumcision of Christ. In the first and second Lessons for the Evening, and in the Epistle,



we are cautioned not only against human traditions, but against legal observances, which were merely connected with the Jewish religion; and we are urged to love and fear God, who requires from us the real circumcision of the heart. The Collect, Epistle, and Gospel of this day were first inserted in the Prayer-book in the year 1549.'

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### *Of the Epiphany.*

The word "Epiphany," in the Greek means manifestation, or showing, and it has been employed to denote, first, the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ in His Nativity, or birth; and secondly, the appearance of the Star to the Wise Men, or Eastern Magi, which was the Saviour's manifestation to the Gentiles; thirdly, the manifestation at His Baptism by St. John, in the River Jordan, when the Holy Ghost descended upon Him in the form of a dove, when a voice was heard from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" and lastly, the manifestation of His Divinity, when He wrought His first miracle at the marriage-feast at Cana in Galilee.

Three of these manifestations, which were most commonly noticed in the early Church, our own branch of the Catholic Church commemorates in the services for the Epiphany, viz., the manifestation to the Wise Men at Bethlehem, in the Collect and Gospel. The manifestation of Christ at His Baptism in the second Morning Lesson, and His manifestation when He performed the miracle of turning water into wine at Cana, in the second Evening Lesson. The other and first manifestation of our Saviour is connected more especially with the services of Christmas Day.

In the earliest ages of the Church the Nativity and Epiphany were celebrated on one day, but about the fourth century they came to be observed on two distinct days.

The latter Festival was more especially set apart for admitting converts into the Church by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, because the Epiphany was supposed to be the day of the Baptism of Him who came to be "a Light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of His people Israel." The three Wise Men who came from the East to Bethlehem to present their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, to the Infant Saviour, were kings or priests, belonging to the sect called Magi. They had heard in their distant country of the expected

Nativity of the Messiah, and they determined to go and see Him with presents, thus in faith recognizing Him as their Prophet, Priest, and King. They were led to Bethlehem by a miraculous star; and it is a tradition of the Church, that on their return to their native country, they made known to others the glad tidings of the Gospel, and spent the remainder of their lives in the service of God, and at last suffered martyrdom for the truth's sake. From Christmas to Epiphany it is the design of our services to exhibit the humanity of our Lord and Saviour. On the succeeding Sundays, from Epiphany to the Sunday called Septuagesima, it is the Church's design, more especially in the first four Sundays after Epiphany, to demonstrate His Divinity by recounting some of the remarkable miracles He performed, and which proved that He was indeed more than man, "God of God, very God of very God."

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*Of the Sundays called Septuagesima, Sexagesima,  
and Quinquagesima.*

The three Sundays which immediately precede the season of Lent have for ages been distinguished

by these long Latin names, signifying seventy, sixty, fifty, as being in round numbers so many days before Easter; and sometimes the first Sunday in Lent has been termed *Quadragesima*, as being about forty days before Easter.

The Tuesday after *Quinquagesima* Sunday is called *Shrove-Tuesday*, a name given it from an old Saxon word, *shrive*, *shrift*, or *shrove*: it being usual in the early Church for the people to make a more particular confession of their sins in preparation for the approaching season of Lent.

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### *Of Lent.*

The word "Lent" means spring, as commemorating at that period of the year the forty days of our Saviour's fasting and temptation in the wilderness. The penitential season of Lent has been observed from the earliest, and even from apostolic times. Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, speaks of its observance as customary in the Church, in a letter he wrote towards the close of the second century to Victor, Bishop of Rome. Lent was the principal time for preparing converts for admission into the Church by the Sacrament of Baptism; and we read in the writings of St. Chrysostom that it

was usual to have sermons at each daily service during this solemn season.

In one of his homilies preached in Lent, he says, "To assemble in this place every day during Lent, to hear sermons continually, and to fast the whole season, is not all that is required. If these assemblies, exhortations, and fastings, do not spiritualize the soul, so far from being profitable, they will but tend to increase our condemnation. If after much care and culture, our dispositions be not meliorated; if the angry man does not become meek, and the passionate gentle and mild; if the covetous man does not desist from his ardour in the pursuit of riches and give himself to almsdeeds; if the intemperate man does not become sober and chaste; if the vainglorious does not learn to despise false honour, and to seek that which is true; if we do not conquer these and all other affections that proceed from natural infirmity, though we assemble here every day, and enjoy our continual preaching and instruction with the aid of fasting,—what apology can we make?

The last week in Lent, which is called Holy or Passion Week, in especial memory of our Saviour's sufferings, was kept by the early Christians with a great amount of solemnity and

devotion. The same St. Chrysostom writing on this point says, "We call this the great week, not because its days are longer, or more in number than those of other weeks, but on account of the great things that in it were performed by our Lord. In this great week an end was put to the tyranny which the devil had long exercised: death was destroyed, the strong man was bound and his goods were spoiled, sin was taken away and the curse abolished, Paradise was opened, and Heaven made accessible, men and angels were united, the partition wall was broken down, the barriers removed, the God of peace made peace between heaven and earth. In this week many increase their labours, some add to their fastings, others to their watchings, and others give more liberal alms.

Not one city only, but all the world goes forth to meet Christ, not with branches of palms in their hands, but with almsgiving, humanity, virtue, tears, prayers, fastings, watchings, and every kind of piety, which they offer and present to Christ their Lord."

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*Of the First Day of Lent commonly called Ash  
Wednesday.*

The popular name of Ash-Wednesday is derived from an ancient custom of the Church of sprinkling ashes on the heads of penitents before the minister who said to each of them, "Remember, man, that thou art dust, and unto dust shalt thou return." On the first day of Lent, penitents used to present themselves in the church before the Bishop and Clergy clothed in sackcloth, and with their eyes turned to the ground. The seven Penitential Psalms were recited, and the penitents were then driven out of the Church, and not suffered to return into it before the Thursday in Holy Week, when they were admitted into the company of the faithful and received absolution. At their expulsion the Clergy, reminding them that as Adam was driven out of Paradise, so they must be thrown out of the Church, used to recite the verse of Genesis, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return to the ground, for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." The doors were then shut against them, and the Holy Communion administered to the faithful.

These ceremonies were originally used only in the case of notorious offenders; but, afterwards the pious and devout were induced thus to humble themselves.

When the service was ended, the Priest used to sprinkle a small portion of ashes made from burning the palm-branches, used on the Palm-Sunday of the preceding year, and thus addressed each one, "Remember, O man, that thou art dust, and unto dust shalt thou return." The superstitious practices were laid aside at the Reformation, and all that was valuable was retained in our Communion Service, and in the other offices of the day. The Collect was made new at the Reformation, and for the Epistle is read a portion of the prophecy of Joel, in which we are urged to show external signs of repentance; but not to rely on them alone, but to exhibit marks of inward sorrow without which all outward observances will profit us nothing.

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*Of the Sundays in Lent.*

The first Sunday in Lent has sometimes been called Quadragesima, as being in round numbers forty days before Easter. It is not, however, so termed in the Prayer-book. The fourth Sunday has also been called "Refreshment Sunday," no doubt from the Gospel chosen for the day, which relates the wonderful miracle of our blessed Lord feeding the 5000 in the wilderness.

The Collects and Epistles for the first three Sundays in Lent exhort to patience and perseverance, to self-denial and mortification, to watching against our spiritual enemies—the world, the flesh, and the devil. On the fourth or Mid-Lent Sunday, which was anciently observed with more solemnity than the others, the Church excites her members to spiritual joy, and consoles them under the calamities of life.

The fifth Sunday in Lent has been termed Passion Sunday, because on that day our Lord began openly to predict His passion or sufferings to His apostles. The Sunday next before Easter is generally called Palm Sunday in memory of our Saviour's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, when the multitudes that attended Him cut down branches from the palm trees and strawed them in the way.

The day was also called Hosanna Sunday in some parts of Europe and the East, in commemoration of the people crying out to Christ, "Hosanna to the Son of David, Hosanna in the highest."

The week immediately preceding Easter is termed Holy Week, from the great strictness with which those days were and ought now to be kept in memory of our Holy Redeemer's sufferings, death, and burial.

The Thursday before Easter is called Mandate or Maundy Thursday, from the mandate or commandment given by our Lord to His apostles; the new commandment which He gave them to love one another, after He had washed their feet in token of the love He bore to them, and of the feelings of humility He wished to instil into their minds. This day is especially celebrated as being the one on which the Divine Head of the Church instituted the Holy Eucharist, and commanded all His disciples to the end of time to take the bread and drink the wine in remembrance of Him.

On Maundy Thursday, in memory of our Lord's great act of humility, it was in old times the custom of members of the Church to wash the feet of the poor. Kings and popes, bishops and priests, were accustomed to do so, and after the ceremony,

to distribute alms to the poor, and also refreshment to them.

The custom is still kept up by the Pope in St. Peter's at Rome, and it was observed by our own sovereigns in England until the latter part of the seventeenth century. The ceremony formed part of a service which is still retained in an altered form, and which is called "the Royal Maundy Office," in which especial prayers are offered for the prosperity of the reigning sovereign, which are followed by special acts of alms-giving to the poor. In the early times this was the day on which the penitents who had been excluded on the first day of Lent were received again into the Church.

All the doors were opened to signify that offenders from all quarters of the world, if coming with penitence and faith, might be received into the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ and into the favour of His Church.

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### *Good Friday.*

The day which in old times was called Holy Friday, has in our Church received the beautiful name of Good Friday, because of the Redemption which was then accomplished by our Saviour on

the Cross, and which was the cause of so much good to our lost and fallen race.

The commemoration of our Redeemer's sufferings has always been observed from the earliest ages of Christianity, and it used to be marked as a day of the strictest fasting and humiliation. The three Collects for the day were selected out of nineteen contained in an ancient service book. The first prays for the congregation present ; the second, for the whole body of the faithful ; and the third, in imitation of our blessed Lord's praying on the Cross for His murderers, desires that the effects of Christ's atoning death may be as universal as the design of it ; that Jews, Turks, infidels and heretics may be brought into the one Gospel fold.

The Epistle explains the nature of the Jewish sacrifices, which were types, or figures, of the one, full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice offered on the Cross.

The Gospel relates the story of the Crucifixion, and it is selected from the record of St. John, who was the only apostle actually present at the Passion, and stood beside the Cross of Christ with the faithful women, while His other followers forsook Him and fled. The proper Psalms are most suitable to the day, as they were composed by King David in time of great trouble, and refer mystically

to the sufferings of the Messiah. The first Lesson of the Morning, taken from the twenty-second chapter of Genesis, gives an account of Abraham's faith, and of his readiness to obey the Divine command, to sacrifice his only son Isaac.

This sacrifice we know was not required of him, but a ram was accepted in stead of his son. The whole history is typical of the perfect offering of the Lamb of God.

This Lesson was considered so suitable for the occasion, that we read that it was used in the Church as far back as St. Augustine's time.

The other Lessons of the Morning and Evening, require no explanation, as they so evidently refer to the great event commemorated this day, and to the blessings which we, as Christians, receive from it.

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### *Easter Eve.*

The day between Good-Friday and Easter-Sunday commemorates the descent of our Lord's soul into the unseen world. While His soul was there, His body was resting in the grave. Of both it had

been prophesied, "Thou shalt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption." Easter Eve was always esteemed in the early Church as the most important vigil of the year, and the services were usually protracted until midnight, so that Christians might welcome the early dawn of the Resurrection, and also on account of a Jewish tradition that when Christ comes again to the world, His Advent will take place on Easter Eve.

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### *Easter Day.*

In the second century a great controversy arose between the Eastern and Western Churches concerning the proper time for observing Easter. And this shows us the great antiquity of the festival. It has always been accounted "the Queen of days, the Church's highest Festival."

In the earliest ages it was a custom among Christians, when meeting one another on Easter morning, to say, "Christ is risen," a custom which is still kept up in Russia among the members of the Greek Church. And in our service we commence the office of praise and thanksgiving with the

Anthem, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast." "Christ is risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." The proper Psalms appointed for the day treat of the opposition raised against Christ's kingdom, of His victory in His resurrection from the dead, and of His exaltation. The first Lessons of the Morning and Evening Service give an account of the Jewish Passover, and of the wonderful deliverance of Israel from Egypt. The Passover being typical of Christ, the True Paschal Lamb, and the coming out of Egypt, and the destruction of Pharaoh and his host, prefiguring our deliverance from Satan, sin, and death. Just as Israel saw on that great day at the Red Sea their enemies lying dead on the shore, so may we behold the powers of death and hell vanquished by the triumphant resurrection of Christ from the grave.

"It is a singular and beautiful coincidence that the season of the year wherein the glorious resurrection of the Redeemer is commemorated, should so well accord with the event; and well has the Church, following the guidance of God's blessed Word, perpetually united the Easter and Spring periods. What a soul-awakening scene then presents itself in the country. Every shrub and tree is half clothed with new verdure; the air is laden

with that indescribable, but exquisite fragrance, which exhales itself from the open furrows of the ploughed fields, and the buds and blossoms which have made their appearance. The year is new born, and it is as "life from the dead." This renewed life, too, seems to be shared by the countless myriads of insects and winged creatures which everywhere come forth to greet the returning sun. How striking is the application of all this to Christ, our Sun of Righteousness."

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*Of the Monday and Tuesday in Easter Week.*

The Easter Festival was considered in the early Church so high a solemnity, that it was the general custom to keep it for seven days after Easter Sunday. And this is mentioned by St. Chrysostom in one of his homilies.

Our own Church limits the special observance to two days, Monday and Tuesday in this week, and repeats the Collect used on Easter-day.

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*Of the Sundays after Easter.*

Though the Paschal Festival was celebrated in the early Church only for a week after Easter Sunday, yet it was kept in an inferior degree for fifty days until Whitsuntide. Hence the first Sunday after Easter was termed Low Sunday, from the contrast between the joys of Easter and the first return to the more ordinary services. On this day it was the custom of the Church for the newly baptized to lay aside the white robes which they had worn every day since Easter Eve. These robes were stored in the churches that they might be brought forward again as evidences in case they denied the faith they professed in their baptism.

The Epistle for the day seems to have been selected in reference to the ceremony.

It exhorts the newly-baptized, who are born of God, to labour to overcome the world, as they had promised to do when they were baptized.

The other Sundays after Easter are all commemorations of our Saviour's resurrection, and point to the promises of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, who was so miraculously poured down on the members of the early Church on the day of Pentecost. The Collects for the Sundays after

Easter, are of very great antiquity, except the one for the second Sunday, which was made new in the year 1549. The fifth Sunday, being the first of the week in which the Rogation days occur, is commonly called Rogation Sunday. There are three days, viz., Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, before Holy Tuesday, or Ascension-day, which are called Rogation days. They were first instituted as days of public abstinence in the middle of the fifth century by Mamercus, Bishop of Vienne, in France. The terrible calamity then threatened that city and diocese, of an irruption of the Goths; and to try and avert it, and to appease the wrath of Heaven, the Bishop obtained permission from the Senate to set apart these three days as public fasts, when processions were formed, and supplications offered to God that He might be pleased to pardon their sins, and to avert the threatened judgment. These supplications are in the Greek language called Litanies, in the Latin Rogation, and hence the term Rogation-days. These Rogational processions were retained in England till the Reformation, when processions of every kind were abolished, on account of the superstitious abuse of them.

An order was issued in the reign of Edward VI., and again in Elizabeth's reign, that these days

should be appointed for the perambulations of the circuits of parishes.

The royal injunction of the year 1559 requires "that the Curate in the common perambulation, used heretofore in the days of Rogations, shall at certain convenient places admonish the people to give thanks to God in the beholding of God's benefits, for the increase and abundance of His fruits upon the face of the earth, with the saying of the 103rd Psalm: at which time also the same minister shall inculcate these or such sentences, 'Cursed be he which translateth the bounds or dolles of his neighbour, or such other order of prayers as shall be appointed.'" No such order of prayer has been since published, though a homily has been appointed which is divided into four parts, the first three parts to be read on the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, and the fourth on the day when the perambulation of the parish took place.

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*Ascension Day.*

On Ascension Day the triumph of our Lord was perfected, when forty days after the resurrection

He went up in the presence of His apostles into heaven, where He ever sitteth at the right hand of the Divine Majesty as our Mediator and Intercessor. And there He will sit until He comes again with power and great glory to judge both the quick and the dead. In thankful acknowledgment of this completion of our redemption, the Church has from the earliest ages set apart this day for its commemoration. St. Augustine mentions it in one of his sermons, in which he says, "We celebrate this day the solemnity of the Ascension." And St. Chrysostom has a homily upon it, "We fell (says he) from an earthly paradise, but we this day ascend into heaven where mansions are provided for our reception." "Christ (says Cyprian), ascended into heaven in the sight of His disciples that they and we might assuredly believe that we shall follow, and not think it a thing incredible for us, both our bodies and souls, to be translated thither." This day is so highly esteemed in the Church, that proper Psalms and Lessons are appointed.

The facts of the Ascension are related in the portion of Scripture appointed for the Epistle and Gospel, and types of it are to be found in the event of Moses going up to Mount Sinai for forty days to receive the law from God,

and to deliver it to the Jews; and Elijah ascending to heaven in a chariot of fire and with horses of fire, and conferring a double portion of his spirit on his successor Elisha; which was typical of our Saviour, soon after His ascension, pouring down the Holy Ghost upon His apostles assembled at Pentecost. The second Lessons are very suitable for the day, and the Proper Psalms especially point to the victory of the King of Glory, to the destruction of His enemies, and to His exaltation at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

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*Sunday after Ascension Day.*

The ten days which elapsed between the ascension of our Lord and the descent of the Holy Ghost, were anciently termed "the days of expectation," because during that period the apostles with the women and Mary the Mother of Jesus, continued with one accord in the Holy City, for their ascended Lord had "commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father."

The Collect prays for the comfort of the Holy Ghost, and for exaltation to heaven whither our

Saviour Christ has gone before. The Epistle exhorts to sobriety and charity, and the Gospel contains the promise of the Comforter who is the Spirit of truth, and who would be the support of the disciples in the many trials and sufferings of their missionary lives.

### *Whit Sunday.*

The great Festival of Whit Sunday commemorates the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit according to the Saviour's promise on the apostles and other members of the early Church assembled at Jerusalem. The miracle is related in the second chapter of the Acts, and it took place on the Day of Pentecost.

The Feast of the Pentecost derived its name from a Greek word meaning fifty, as being fifty days after the Passover.

It was one of the three great feasts of the Jews, the other two being the Feast of the Passover, in memory of their coming out of Egypt and of the destroying Angel passing over the houses of the Israelites when he cut off all the firstborn of the Egyptians, and the Feast of Tabernacles in memory of their sojourning for forty years in

tabernacles or tents in the wilderness. The Feast of Pentecost was instituted by God Himself, as a memorial of the day on which He gave the Moral Law, viz., the Ten Commandments to Israel at Mount Sinai by the hands of Moses.

That Law is equally binding on us Christians as it was on God's ancient people: for our Blessed Lord said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the Law and the Prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil."

The Pentecost was also called, "The Feast of Weeks" as being a week of weeks, or seven weeks after the Passover; and on the day of Pentecost, which was a solemn harvest Festival in the Jewish Church, two loaves of the first bread made from the New Corn were offered as a matter of thanksgiving for God's bounty in the harvest. As on the day of Pentecost, Moses in giving the Law declared Israel to be a "a peculiar treasure, a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation" (Exodus xix. 5 and 6; so on this day in the Primitive Church the Holy Ghost descended on a new Israel, that they too might be "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people."

The English name of the day is Whit Sunday, and it has received different explanations; some

supposing it to be White Sunday, on account of the white robes which were worn on that day in the early Church by the newly-baptized. Others suppose that it derived its name from the old English word "wit" meaning wisdom, because on that day Heavenly Wisdom was poured down on the Apostolic Church. Whitsuntide is one of the Canonical Ember seasons, the summer ordinations taking place on Trinity Sunday.

It is a fact worthy of note that on Whit Sunday June 9th, 1549, the English Book of Common Prayer was first used in our Church instead of the Latin Service. Copies of the Prayer-book had been printed and published before that day; but Whit Sunday was no doubt chosen for the introduction of our Liturgy, in devout acknowledgment that the Holy Ghost guided the Reformers in the important step which they had taken.

The proper Psalms and Lessons for the day, as well as for the Monday and Tuesday in Whitsun Week, are very suitably chosen to remind us of the descent of that blessed Spirit and of its miraculous consequences to the Church.

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*Of Trinity Sunday.*

The Festival of Trinity is not so old as some of the preceding ones. As the Church in all her services commemorates the mystery of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, the Three Persons and yet but One God, it was not at first thought necessary to set apart one particular festival in honour of the Trinity in Unity. However, when the Arians and other kindred sects, who denied the Godhead of the Lord Jesus Christ and the doctrine of the Trinity, were spread throughout the world and greatly afflicted the Church with heresy and schism, it was deemed right to make the mystery of the Trinity the subject of especial meditation, and to appoint this Sunday in particular, and twenty-five Sundays after, in honour of the Triune God. There are very many texts indeed which bear on this point, and the Church has chosen two proper Lessons for this day out of the Book of Genesis, the first chapter of which proves a plurality, or more than one Person in the Godhead, for "God said, Let us make man in our image." And the second shows a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, when the great Jehovah Himself appeared to Abraham in company with two others, and the patriarch acknowledged Him to be "the Judge of all the

earth.” The second Lesson formerly used at Morning Prayer, but now in the Evening, which relates the Baptism of our Lord by John the Baptist, contains one of the most decided proofs of the doctrine of the Trinity. All the Persons were present at the waters of Jordan; the divine Son was baptized, the Holy Ghost visibly descended upon Him in the form of a dove, and the voice of God the Father was heard from heaven declaring, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.” In the portion of Scripture selected from the Book of Revelation the adoration of the Church Triumphant in heaven, saying, “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty,” seems of itself a sufficient manifestation of the Three Persons and yet but One God.

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*Of the Sundays from Trinity to Advent.*

It is to be remarked that the Sundays from Advent to Trinity commemorate the great mysteries of our redemption from our Saviour’s birth to His Ascension into heaven, and His pouring out the Holy Spirit upon His Apostles assembled at Pentecost. And they are therefore provided with

gospels and epistles suitable to those solemn events. The Sundays from Trinity to Advent more generally refer to our blessed Lord's career illustrated by some striking parable, doctrine or miracle. All the Collects were taken out of the service book of Gregory, and were but slightly altered at the last review.

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*St. Andrews's Day. (November 30th.)*

As St. Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was the first to find the Messiah, and to bring others to Him, so the Church honours him first in her course of holy days, and places his festival at the beginning of Advent as the most appropriate to herald in the Redeemer's coming.

We do not read so much of St. Andrew in the Gospel as of the other apostles, especially his brother Peter. He is first mentioned in the first chapter of St. John's Gospel as following Jesus, and then finding his own brother Simon, and saying unto him, "We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

He is mentioned on only two other occasions in the Gospel, viz., in the twelfth chapter of St. John, where Andrew and Philip tell Jesus of the enquir-

ing Greeks; and in the thirteenth chapter of St. Mark, where Andrew and Peter engage in private conversation with our Lord, and ask Him about the time when Jerusalem should be destroyed.

Ecclesiastical history records that this Apostle spent his time in preaching the gospel to the countries now known as Turkey in Asia, and also to the provinces on the Black Sea which are now included in the Russian Empire. He is supposed to have been the founder of the Russian Church as St. Paul is said to have founded the Church in Britain.

St. Andrew, we are told, finished his career by suffering crucifixion at a town called Patras in the north of the Morea, A.D. 70, about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem.

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*St. Thomas's Day. (December 21st.)*

The Festival of St. Thomas is placed here, not that he was the second to believe that Jesus was the Messiah, but the last to believe in His resurrection.

This Apostle's festival is placed just before our Lord's Nativity because unless, like St. Thomas,

we acknowledge Him to be "our Lord and our God," His birth, death, and resurrection, will be of no avail for the salvation of our souls. Of this Apostle's kindred and country we have very little account given us. He was certainly a Jew, and was born probably in Galilee, and is called Didymus, which in the Greek language means twin, just as Thomas has that signification in the Hebrew. There are four sayings of St. Thomas recorded by the Evangelists: as when he said to his Divine Master, "Lord, we know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way?" (John xiv. 5). And again, when he with the other apostles would have dissuaded Christ from returning into Judea because the Jews there sought to stone Him.

Though our Lord persisted in His intention to visit that part of the Holy Land that He might raise Lazarus from the dead at Bethany, St. Thomas proposed to the rest of the apostles that they at all events should accompany the Lord thither. "Let us," said he, "go that we may die with Him."

On both of these occasions the Apostle exhibited a want of faith, and yet in the last a certain warm and zealous love for Christ.

The other two occasions in which St. Thomas is mentioned were after the Lord's resurrection, when

he said, "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe."

And when he confessed his faith in the risen Saviour, and addressed Him as "My Lord and my God," and Jesus said unto him, "Thomas, because thou hast seen thou hast believed. Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." (John xx. 28.)

It is recorded in early Church history that Thomas exercised his ministry in Parthia and among the Medes; that he also preached the Gospel and founded the Church in India. The Christians of St. Thomas still bear witness to his labours in the southern portion of that immense empire; and in the north there are some remains of the early planting of the Christian faith, though mixed up with the idolatrous worship of Thibet. It is supposed that St. Thomas suffered martyrdom by being stoned and pierced with a spear at Taprobane, now called Sumatra.

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*The Conversion of St. Paul. (January 25.)*

St. Paul is not commemorated by his death, but by the wonderful miracle of his conversion, which is related, together with the events of his after life and ministry, in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles. He was pre-eminently the Apostle of the Gentiles, while St. Peter was the Apostle of the Circumcision, *i.e.*, sent to preach the Gospel to the Jews. St. Paul is supposed to have planted the Church in Britain; and when he had "fought a good fight, and finished his course, and kept the faith," he with his fellow-labourer St. Peter suffered martyrdom at Rome, in the dreadful persecution the Emperor Nero raised against the Christian Church. St. Paul, as being a man of rank and position, was beheaded. St. Peter, as belonging to an inferior class, suffered the more ignominious death of crucifixion; and it is related that not esteeming himself worthy of dying in the same way as his Saviour, he made a request that he might be crucified with his head downwards.

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*The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, commonly  
called the Purification of St. Mary the Virgin.  
(February 2.)*

The Festival of the Purification is in honor of the infant Saviour being presented in the Temple, when His mother, in accordance with the requirements of the Mosaic Law, made a thankoffering of two young pigeons. When Jesus was brought into the Temple He was recognized by the aged Simeon, to whom God had declared that he should not die until he had seen the Lord's Christ; and he "took Him up in his arms," and repeated that beautiful hymn which we sing in our Evening Service: "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, etc." The infant Saviour was acknowledged also by the Prophetess Anna, who coming into the Temple at that same instant "gave thanks unto the Lord, and spake of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Israel."

In the old time the popular name of this festival was Candlemas, on account of a very ancient custom in the Church of walking in procession with lighted candles, and singing hymns. This custom was with many other superstitious ceremonies abolished at the Reformation in the



second year of Edward VI., through the influence of Archbishop Cranmer.

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*St. Matthias' Day. (February 24th.)*

But little is known of St. Matthias, except that he was chosen to take the place of the apostate Judas. The account of the consecration of Matthias is given in the 1st chapter of the Acts, where it is said in the 26th verse "They gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the Eleven Apostles." It is recorded in Church history that Matthias, after exercising his ministry for a time among the Jews, went into Cappadocia, and was crucified there in the year A.D. 64.

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*The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.  
(March 25th.)*

A Festival is held in the Church in honor of the angel Gabriel appearing to the Virgin Mary with assurances of the Divine favour: "Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favour with God; and behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a son, and shall call His

name Jesus." The blessed Virgin Mary is the first among women, as the mother of the Lord, though on no account to be esteemed an object of religious worship, in accordance with the views of the erroneous Church of Rome. This day, also called Lady-day, is appointed in her special honor, and it also demands our regard as having reference to the Incarnation, *i.e.* the taking our human nature into His divine nature, by the second Person of the Holy Trinity, our Lord Jesus Christ. Then took place the wonderful union of the "two whole and perfect natures,—*i.e.* the Godhead and the Manhood—in One Person, the Great Mediator between heaven and earth, Christ Jesus, very God and very Man"—that so in His human nature He might offer up Himself "a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world," and might at the same time, by virtue of His divine power, remit the sentence of death incurred by man as the punishment of sin, and "open the kingdom of heaven to all believers."

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*St. Mark's Day. (April 25th.)*

The Evangelist, St. Mark, is not supposed to be the same person as John, whose surname was Mark, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, the nephew of Barnabas, who was rejected by St. Paul when he intended to travel into Asia, because on a former occasion he had deserted the Apostle, and preferred his own ease to a voyage of difficulty and danger. However, St. Mark seems to have profited by the censure of St. Paul, and afterwards to have become a zealous and useful minister of the Church—the Apostle commending him and saying that he was “profitable for the ministry.”

The Saint in whose honour this festival was appointed was “Marcus, my son,” of whom St. Peter writes (1 Peter i. 13) as being his companion at Babylon. It was his companionship with St. Peter that led him to write the Gospel which bears his name; and among the ancient writers that Gospel is connected with the name of St. Peter as well as with that of St. Mark.

The latter period of his ministry was spent at Alexandria, in Egypt, where his labours were very successful in converting multitudes to Christianity. It is said also that the Evangelist carried

the truths of our religion in other regions of Africa; but that Alexandria was the principal scene of his labours, and the Church that he founded there was in the apostolic age most pre-eminent, as was also the Liturgy which bears the name of St. Mark. On the occasion of a heathen feast held in the Egyptian capital, the idolatrous mob rushed forth from their temple and dragged the Evangelist through the streets, and put him in prison. On the next morning, it is said on an Easter-day towards the latter part of the first century, he was put to the most horrible torture, which terminated in his death. His constancy and patience never failed him, and he never lost his faith in Him who had said, "Lo, I am with you always even to the end of the world."

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*St. Philip and St. James' Day. (May 1.)*

St. Philip was one of our Lord's earliest disciples, and was born at Bethsaida, a town of Galilee in the neighbourhood of the Sea of Tiberias. He is thought to have accompanied Christ for some time, while St. Andrew and his brother Peter returned to their ordinary occupation as fishermen after their first call. We no sooner hear of Philip

coming to Jesus, than we find him hastening to Nathaniel, better known as Bartholomew, and joyfully telling that he had "found Him of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth the son of Joseph." When our Lord was about to exhibit His miraculous power in feeding the hungry multitude, to prove the faith of Philip, He demanded of him "Whence can we find bread that these may eat"? Philip, who did not then seem fully to realize the Divine power of the Saviour, replied, "Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient, that every one of them may take a little." On another occasion, when Philip said to Christ, "Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us," Jesus gave him the loving rebuke, "Have I been so long time with you, and hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?" After the dispersion of the apostles St. Philip carried the Gospel to Northern Asia, and it is recorded by St. Chrysostom and Eusebius that he was crucified at Hierapolis, a great seat of idolatry in Phrygia. St. James the Less, probably so called on account of the lowness of his stature, was the son of Alphæus or Cleophas, and of Mary, and was nephew of Joseph the husband of the Virgin

Mary the mother of our Lord. Hence he is called in Scripture "the brother of the Lord."

He was the first Bishop of Jerusalem, and on account of his eminent piety and uprightness was distinguished by the title of "the Righteous" or "the Just." He was the author of the General Epistle of James, and is said to have suffered martyrdom in the year 62, by being thrown off a pinnacle or wing of the Temple by the persecuting Scribes and Pharisees. This wicked deed took place but a very few years before the Temple itself was destroyed, and the Jewish nation was brought to ruin by the armies of Rome under Titus.

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*St. Barnabas. (June 11th.)*

The name of St. Barnabas derives its chief note from its connection with that of St. Paul, whose companion he was in many of his voyages. Barnabas was born at Cyprus, he was a Jew of the tribe of Levi, and his original name was Joses or Joseph. He is supposed to have been brought up with St. Paul at the feet of Gamaliel. When the number of the twelve Apostles had been reduced by the martyrdom of St. James the Great, as related in the 12th chapter of the Acts, probably

Barnabas was selected to fill the vacancy ; for "the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them ;" and "when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away." Saul of Tarsus, afterwards St. Paul, had here an extraordinary commission to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles ; and he associated Barnabas with him, who accompanied him for about fourteen years on several missionary journeys.

The name of Barnabas signifies "the son of consolation," which he no doubt received from the other Apostles on account of his kind and liberal disposition ; for it is said of him that "having land he sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet."

His name of "Son of Consolation" was also fitly given him, for it is said that when he saw the influence of Divine grace on the minds of his hearers, "he was glad, and exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord," "for he was a good man and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith, and much people was added to the Lord."

With St. Paul we find Barnabas employed in his native country, Cyprus, in converting the Roman Deputy Sergius Paulus to the faith, not-

withstanding the opposition of Elymas the sorcerer who was struck blind by the Apostle for his blasphemy. We read of Barnabas also accompanying St. Paul to Lystra, when having restored a cripple to the use of his limbs, the heathen people were with difficulty restrained from sacrificing to the apostles as gods. It is thought that after his separation from St. Paul on account of their controversy about John Mark, Barnabas spent the rest of his life in his native country, Cyprus; and that the Jews stoned him at Salamis, and that he received his crown of martyrdom under circumstances similar to those which caused St. Stephen's death. There is an Epistle which bears the name of Barnabas: by some scholars it has been considered authentic, but it has been generally given up, as the opinion of most eminent writers is that it was not written by this Apostle, but by some other author in the second century.

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*St. John the Baptist's Day. (June 24th.)*

John's miraculous birth, which preceded by six months that of our Lord; his hard ascetic life in the wilderness of Judea, when as the pioneer of the Messiah he prepared the way before Him by



preaching repentance to all classes of the people who came to hear him ; his cruel death at the instigation of a profligate woman and a blood-thirsty tyrant,—are so well known by the most ordinary readers of the Gospels, that it is not considered necessary to relate them here. It is sufficient to say that in all branches of the Catholic Church from the earliest ages, in the Eastern, in the Latin, and in our own Church, a day has always been set apart to commemorate the saintly life of our Lord's forerunner, and his removal from the Church Militant on earth to the Church Triumphant in heaven.

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*St. Peter's Day. (June 29th.)*

St. Peter with his brother Andrew were the first of our Lord's disciples who were called to the apostolic office. We are told that he was a Galilean born at Bethsaida, a little town on the Lake of Galilee, where he with other of the apostles gained his livelihood by fishing. His original name was Simon, and he was the son of Jonas. The Greek name Peter was given him by the Lord, probably in reference to his natural boldness and constancy in the faith, though we

know that on one sad occasion he miserably fell away from his own steadfastness, and tried to save his life by denying his Divine Master. However, generally speaking, he was bold and ardent in his zeal, and when he professed his faith in Christ as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, Jesus proclaimed him to be the Rock on which His Church was to be built, and against which even the gates or power of hell should not prevail.

Our Lord's remarkable words to St. Peter, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," if they declare any supremacy of Peter over the rest of the apostles, certainly do not support the arrogant claims of the Popes, who have always pretended to be his successors. St. Peter himself assumed no pre-eminence, though he took a leading part after our Lord's ascension, and preached the first gospel sermon on the day of Pentecost, and thus "opened the kingdom of heaven" to three thousand believers.

This apostle also was the instrument of converting the first Gentile convert, Cornelius, and he is frequently mentioned in the Book of the Acts.

He presided as Bishop over the Church at Antioch, and in the year 63 he was crucified at Rome in the persecution of the Church under Nero, in which St. Paul also met his death.

It is a tradition of the Church that the Apostle of the Gentiles was beheaded at a place called Aquæ Salviæ, three miles from Rome, and that St. Peter, the Apostle of the Circumcision, was crucified at the Vatican.

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*St. James the Apostle. (July 25th.)*

St. James, surnamed the Great, was the brother of the Lord's beloved disciple, St. John. He was the son of Zebedee and Salome, and was of the kindred of the Virgin Mary, though we do not know what was the exact degree of relationship. St. James, with his brother St. John, was called to the apostleship immediately after St. Andrew and his brother Simon Peter: they were all exercising their trade as fishermen on the Lake of Galilee. We may imagine that both James and his brother John showed great energy and zeal in their Master's cause, as they received from Him the title of "Boanerges," or "sons of thunder."

On one occasion they both received a rebuke from Him because they wished to bring down fire from heaven to destroy those Samaritans who refused to receive their Lord.

And Jesus said to them, "Ye know not what

spirit ye are of ; for the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them."

On another occasion their mother, Salome, ventured to ask the Lord Jesus to grant that they might sit, the one on His right hand, and the other on His left in His kingdom, doubtless thinking, in accordance with the prevalent notions of the Jews, that He was about to establish an earthly throne at Jerusalem. Our blessed Lord immediately turned their thoughts to higher and more spiritual contemplations, and said to them, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" meaning the baptism of suffering. "They say unto Him, We are able." And "He saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with ; but to sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." St. James was the first apostle to suffer martyrdom, and he is the only one whose death is mentioned in the New Testament. The fact of his death is related in the twelfth chapter of Acts : "Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hand to vex certain of the Church, and he killed James the brother of John with the sword."

It may be mentioned that St. James is the Patron Saint of Spain; and his name has often been used as the battle cry of the Christian hosts when going forth to fight with the Mahometan and Moorish armies, who at one time were so powerful as to threaten to extinguish the light of Christianity in Europe, as they had driven that religion from Asia and Africa.

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*St. Bartholomew. (August 24th.)*

St. Bartholomew is the same as Nathaniel, whose call is related in the first chapter of St. John's Gospel, of whom our Lord said, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile."

The tradition of the Church respecting him is that he journeyed into Northern India, and there spread the Christian Faith.

It is said that by the order of a heathen king of Armenia named Astyages, he suffered the most dreadful death of being flayed alive, probably on a cross, and that he bore this cruel treatment with the greatest amount of fortitude, and tried to confirm his converts in the faith even to the latest moments of his life.

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*St. Matthew. (September 21st.)*

The holy Apostle and Evangelist St. Matthew, whose other name was Levi, was called to his office when in the discharge of his duty as a publican. He was sitting at the receipt of custom at the Lake of Galilee and collecting the tolls of those who passed by. It was near Capernaum that he was discharging this function when the Saviour said to him, "Follow Me;" then, like Simon and Andrew, and the two sons of Zebedee, he forsook all and followed Him. After his call he invited his friends to partake of a feast at his house. The Saviour was present there, and when the censorious Pharisees complained that He did eat with publicans and sinners, He declared that He came not "to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

St. Matthew is the first of the inspired writers who handed down to posterity the story of the life and death of the Blessed Redeemer, and the account of the atonement which He effected for the redemption of a fallen world.

After the resurrection of Jesus St. Matthew continued with the rest of the members of the early Church in the city of Jerusalem, waiting for the promise of the Holy Ghost. He then began his

ministry in Judea, and it is said that he afterwards travelled among the barbarous nations beyond Egypt. He took part in the evangelization of Chaldea, and at last suffered for his Master's cause at a place called Nadabar.

About eight years after the Crucifixion he wrote the Gospel which bears his name—first in the Hebrew language. The Hebrew version was afterwards superseded by a Greek translation, which is imagined to have been the work of the Evangelist himself.

This translation was received and approved by the apostles, and has always been considered by the Church authentic.

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*St. Michael and All Angels. (September 29th.)*

The Festival of St. Michael differs from any other which the Church celebrates during the course of the year. It refers to the Holy Angels—that order of heavenly beings who interest themselves in the welfare of mankind and are described by St. Paul as “ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto them who shall be heirs of salvation.”

Angels attended our Lord and strengthened

Him in His temptation, and in "His agony and bloody sweat" in the garden of Gethsemane. They waited upon Him at His birth and resurrection, and He will come again "with all the holy angels" at the end of time "to judge the quick and the dead."

The apostle St. Peter was miraculously delivered from prison by an angel, and one stood by St. Paul and encouraged him when he was on his voyage to Rome. Our Lord declared that "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

The Archangel especially commemorated this day is St. Michael, of whom little is known. It is related of him in the twelfth chapter of Revelation, which is the portion of Scripture chosen for the Epistle of the day, that "there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

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*St. Luke the Evangelist. (October 18th.)*

But little is said in the Bible of the Evangelist St. Luke. Wherever he is mentioned he is always spoken of in terms which set forth the constancy of his faith, and the amiability of his character. It is thought that he was born at Antioch, and is represented in the Book of the Acts, which he wrote, as the companion of St. Paul, to whom he was deeply attached. So faithful was he, that when Demas had forsaken the great Apostle, "having loved this present world," St. Paul wrote in his second Epistle to Timothy, "Only Luke is with me." He always spoke of him in the most affectionate terms, as "his fellow labourer," "the beloved physician," and "the brother whose praise is in the Gospel." After the death of St. Paul, the Evangelist continued his ministry for some time. He is supposed to have finished it by a death of martyrdom, being crucified on an olive-tree in some city of Greece, when he was eighty years of age.

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*St. Simon and St. Jude, Apostles. (October 28th.)*

The apostles St. Simon and St. Jude are commemorated together because they were brothers, being the sons of Cleophas, or Alphæus, and nephews of Joseph. And so they were called brethren of our Lord; the term "brethren" being used in a wider sense among the Jews than among us. Of the first of these, St. Simon, we have but little information in the Gospel. He was called the Canaanite and Zelotes, in token of his ardent zeal in the promotion of the cause of Christ. It has been recorded, we know not with what truth, that St. Simon in the course of his missionary labours visited our island Britain, which was then in the darkness of heathenism. Another record which seems the most probable says of him, that he preached the Gospel in Persia, and met the same kind of death as that which the prophet Isaiah suffered, viz., by being sawn asunder. St. Jude also suffered with Simon, having exercised his ministry in the same country.

St. Jude has two other names, Lebbaeus and Thaddæus, and he calls himself "the brother of James"—probably to distinguish himself from the other Jude, or Judas surnamed Iscariot. This Jude has left behind him a Catholic Epistle,

wherein he exhorts all Christians earnestly "to contend for the faith once delivered to the Saints." And he warns them to resist those deadly errors which were fast creeping into the Church. St. Jude was a married apostle ; and it is related by Eusebius an old Church historian, that two of his grandsons were brought before the tribunal of Domitian, the last of the twelve Cæsars, and one of the worst of the many bad Emperors of Rome ; and that they boldly confessed before the cruel tyrants the faith of Christ crucified.

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*All Saints' Day. (November 1st.)*

The Festival of All Saints is in honour of the great multitude who have gone before ; who "have fought the good fight, and have finished their course, and have kept the faith ;" and who are now waiting in the intermediate world for the everlasting crown of righteousness which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, will give them, and to us also if we follow their example, in the day of His glorious appearing.

St. Paul in the 11th chapter to the Hebrews gives a long catalogue of those who overcame by faith in the Jewish Church, and many like them

since have "through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens; and others have had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonments. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword, they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy;) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

This festival of All Saints' is of very ancient date, and originated in the dedication of the Pantheon, at Rome, in honour of all the martyrs, about the year of our Lord 608.

THE ORDER FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE  
LORD'S SUPPER,  
OR HOLY COMMUNION.

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*The Title of the Office.*

IN the year 1547, according to the direction of Parliament, the title was "The Order of the Communion."

In King Edward's first Book, in the year 1549, the office was termed "The Supper of the Lord, and the Holy Communion, commonly called the Mass."

At the review of the book in 1552 the name Mass was taken away, and the title fixed as it now stands. One of the most ancient titles given to the Eucharist is the one by which we best know it, and it is in accordance with St. John's description of the Sacrament given in the 10th chapter of his 1st Epistle to the Corinthians:—"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the

communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"

The Apostle uses the term "Communion" as showing the fellowship which exists between the Great Head of the Church and His faithful members, by communication to them of His body and blood in that holy Sacrament. For then "we spiritually eat the flesh of Christ and drink His blood; then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us: we are one with Christ, and Christ with us."

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### *The Introductory Rubrics.*

The first Rubric requires that "so many as intend to be partakers of the Holy Communion, shall signify their names to the Curate at least some time the day before."

This good rule, like many other excellent things, has fallen into disuse, though from the first it was evidently the intention of the Church, that it should be complied with, to give the Minister the opportunity of conversing with his people on this important subject, and for the purpose of dissuading some from attending, who, in his opinion, are not qualified.

One disqualification being a contempt or neglect of the apostolic rite of Confirmation. The Rubric in the Confirmation Service saying that "none shall be admitted to the Holy Communion until such time as he be confirmed, or be ready or desirous to be confirmed."

In the old Liturgy of 1549 the order was that information of those who intended to communicate should be given "overnight, or else in the morning, afore the beginning of Matins or immediately after."

This shows that the Morning Prayer was an office used quite distinct from the Communion Service.

Soon after the Reformation, however, from some cause not explained, it became the custom to say Morning Prayer, Litany, and Communion together, and this practice seemed to derive its origin from an order issued in 1571 by Grindal, Archbishop of York.

The second Rubric requires the Curate to repel from the Sacrament any who may be "an open and notorious evil liver, or have done any wrong to his neighbour by word or deed, so that the congregation be thereby offended."

In most cases the vicious and immoral keep themselves from the Holy Table, though it does occasionally happen that such a one presents

himself, and then it becomes the Curate's duty to follow the Rubric, by warning the individual privately not to approach Communion until he has repented and forsaken the sin: and if he does not take the private admonition, it further becomes the Curate's unpleasant but imperative duty to publicly refuse the sacrament to the offending and impenitent person.

Chrysostom in one of his homilies writes on this subject—"Let no Judas, no lover of money, be present at this table; he that is not Christ's disciple, let him depart from it. Let no inhuman, no cruel person, no uncompassionate man, or unchaste, come hither. I speak this to you that administer as well as to those that partake. For it is necessary that I speak these things to you, that you may take great care, and use your utmost diligence to distribute these offerings aright. For no small punishment hangeth over your heads, if knowing any man to be wicked you suffer him to be partaker of this table, for his blood shall be required at your hands. Wherefore, if he be a general or a provincial governor, or the Emperor himself, that cometh unworthily, forbid him and keep him off, thy power is greater than his."

And we know from Church history, how another Father—Ambrose, Bishop of Milan—



fearlessly followed this rule. The Emperor Theodosius, after committing a barbarous crime by ordering his guards to fall on the people of Thessalonica, who were thereby put to death in great numbers, presented himself at St. Ambrose's Church in Milan to receive the Holy Communion; but the good Bishop, when he heard of it, met him courageously at the church doors, and obliged him to return and first repent himself of his crime. "With what eyes (saith he) can you behold the temple of Him who is the common Lord of all? With what feet can you tread this holy place? How can you put out those hands to receive the blessed elements which are yet reeking with innocent blood? How can you take the precious blood into that mouth which gave out such barbarous and bloody orders? Depart therefore, and take heed that you do not increase your first crime by a second. Submit yourself to the bond which the Lord of the world has been pleased to bind you, which is only medicinal and intended to work your cure." The repulse the Emperor acquiesced in, and offered himself no more to those holy rites, till he had in tears repented of the sad effects of his hasty anger.

It is to be remarked that in the Rubric mention is made of the "Lord's Table" and not of the

altar, which is a term involving sacrifice and was expunged from the Prayer-book at its revision in 1552.

It is also to be added, that the name "Communion Table" is not used in the Prayer-book, the table being regarded as the table of the Lord and not of communicants. At the time of the Reformation a dispute arose as to whether the old altars on which under Romish rule the Mass had been celebrated should be retained or not. Bishop Hooper, in a sermon preached before King Edward VI. in the fourth year of his reign, said "that it would be well that it might please the Magistrate to turn altars into tables according to the first institution of Christ, to take away the false persuasion of the people which they have of sacrifice to be done upon the altars; for as long as altars remain, both the ignorant people and the ignorant and evil persuaded priest will always dream of sacrifice." This by command of the King in Council led to the alteration of the Rubric, and the present one was inserted, viz., "the table, having at the communion time a fair white linen cloth upon it, shall stand in the body of the church or in the chancel where Morning and Evening Prayer are appointed to be said, and the priest standing at the

north side of the table shall say the Lord's Prayer with the Collect following."

The covering the table at the time of celebration with a fair white linen cloth is a primitive usage. It is not merely for the sake of decency, and as an emblem of purity, but as a memorial of the "shining raiment," "exceeding white as snow" which was seen on our Lord's body on the Mount of the Transfiguration. Fine and white linen too is always represented as the clothing of the redeemed multitudes in heaven.

"The table shall stand in the body of the church, or in the chancel where Morning and Evening Prayer are appointed to be said."

In the old times it was the custom for communicants to kneel in the chancel, the Clergy bringing the elements to them. This was sometimes a matter of inconvenience on account of the chancel being too small to receive many communicants, and so the table was removed to the body of the church, and the sacrament was administered there.

The practice however led to great irreverence, and the bishops in the reign of Charles I. ordered the table to be fixed at the east end of the chancel only. Neale, in his History of the Puritans, remarks on this subject, "It is almost incredible

what a ferment the making this alteration at once raised among the common people.”

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*The Lord's Prayer.*

He who was the Author of the Communion, was also the Author of this prayer, and therefore the Communion Office very aptly commences with this divine form. Jerome asserts that the Lord Jesus Christ taught His disciples this prayer, that they might use it in the Communion, and he expounded the petition “Give us this day our daily bread,” as referring to Christ “The Bread of Life” of which in those primitive and purer times they daily partook at the Lord’s Table.

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*The Collect for Purity.*

As the people of Israel were required to have clean hearts before listening to the first publication of the Moral Law—the Ten Commandments given at Mount Sinai, so ought Christians to have the thoughts of their hearts cleansed by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit before they are fit to hear the Law of God.

*The Ten Commandments.*

We have no power to keep the Commandments in our own strength, and therefore the Church instructs us, as each one is read to offer up that beautiful petition, "Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this Law."

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*The Two Collects for the Queen.*

The prayers which follow are grounded on the Word of God. First on St. Paul's expressed wish in writing to Timothy, "I exhort therefore that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings, and for all that are in authority."

And again, on the declaration, "that the heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord; and that as the rivers of water, He turneth it whithersoever He will."

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*Of the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel.*

From the earliest times, as the writings of Chrysostom and other of the Fathers inform us,

it was the custom of the Church to read some portions of the New Testament, first for the Epistle, and then for the Gospel, at the celebration of the Holy Communion. The Epistle came first, as it seems to have been regarded as a kind of harbinger to the Gospel. The Epistle, though inspired, being the words of the servant, the Gospel the words of the Great Master himself. During the reading of the Epistle the people are to sit; at the reading of the Gospel they are required to stand, to express the special reverence and honour due to the words of the Lord Jesus Christ. In accordance with the ancient Liturgies the people have retained the custom of saying just after the minister has announced the passage to be read out of the Gospel, "Glory be to Thee, O Lord." It was also usual in the ancient Church, when the Gospel was read, to add the words, "Thanks be to God for His holy Gospel;" and this custom is still continued in some of our churches.

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### *The Nicene Creed.*

The Nicene Creed is so called as being drawn up at the great Council held at Nice in the year 325, which was summoned by the authority of the

Emperor Constantine. This confession of faith, which was unanimously received by all the bishops assembled, was intended to set forth the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity in opposition to the opinions of the heretic Arius, who denied the equality of the Father and the Son. The creed set forth at Nice was received, as Athanasius informs us, by all the Christian Churches in the world, and was only impugned by the comparatively few persons who followed the Arian opinions. The latter part of the Creed which speaks of the Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and the Son was added in the year 381, at the second General Council of Constantinople to confute what was called the Macedonian heresy, which denied the divinity of the third Person of the Trinity. The creed established at Constantinople was solemnly confirmed at the third General Council held at Ephesus, A.D. 431, which decreed that "No one shall be permitted to introduce, write, or compose any other faith besides that which was defined by the holy Fathers assembled in the city of Nice with the Holy Ghost." The Nicene Creed has been used in the Communion Office of the Church since the fifth century.

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*Of the Rubric after the Nicene Creed.*

After the Creed follows a direction to the minister, telling him what he is to publish to the people.

First, "The Curate shall declare to the people what holy days or fasting days are in the week following to be observed;" "and then also (if occasion be) shall notice be given of the Communion," "and the Banns of Marriage published."

This part of the Rubric was altered by Act of Parliament in the reign of George II. (1753). And it was enacted that "all banns of matrimony shall be published in an audible manner in the parish church according to the form of words prescribed by the Rubric affixed to the office of matrimony in the Book of Common Prayer, upon three Sundays preceding the solemnization of marriage, during the time of Morning Service or of Evening Service (if there be no Morning Service in such church upon any of those Sundays) immediately after the second Lesson, and all other the rules prescribed by the said rubric concerning the publication of banns and the solemnization of matrimony, and not hereby altered, shall be duly observed." It is also added in the Rubric that "Briefs, Citations, and Excommunications shall be read, and



that nothing shall be proclaimed or published in the church during the time of divine service but by the minister, nor by him but what is prescribed by the rules of this book or enjoined by the Queen, or by the ordinary of the place.”

This latter part of the Rubric was evidently inserted to prevent any ludicrous or trivial notice being uttered before the congregation. The briefs were letters patent anciently issued by the sovereign, giving directions about the collection of alms for special purposes, such as the building and repairing of churches, etc., sometimes issued on account of accidents by fire, inundations, etc. Briefs were abolished by Act of Parliament in the year 1828, and so were “Queen’s Letters” a few years ago, which were granted in aid of some of our great home and foreign missionary and educational societies. Citations were orders publicly given to certain persons to appear in courts of justice for their cases to be heard. Excommunications were ecclesiastical censures pronounced on those who had broken the law of God and of the Church.

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*Of the Sermon.*

“Then” (the Rubric says) “shall follow the sermon, or one of the homilies already set forth, or hereafter to be set forth, by authority.”

Here is no authority given for that unmeaning change of vestments which still takes place in the majority of our churches, when the officiating minister retires to the vestry and puts off the only legal vestment, the surplice, for the black academical gown. It is to be hoped that before many years are past the black gown will be entirely discarded, and the question of vestments settled, and a greater uniformity seen in our churches.

It seems that from the apostolic times it has been the custom to deliver sermons or homilies on Sundays and other holy days. This office was at first performed by bishops, who preached every Sunday unless prevented by sickness. In the bishop's absence the sermons were preached by the presbyters, and sometimes by them when the bishop was present and gave permission. Sermons were at first mostly confined to the churches of large cities and towns; and it seems that in the French Church no sermons at all were preached in the smaller country parishes until the sixth century. Even in our own country after the Reformation

but few sermons were preached in villages, and even at Court they were mostly confined to the season of Lent and to the greater festivals of the Church. In this age there are but few parishes in which the Word of God is not preached at least twice on the Sunday, and in very many towns and country churches also sermons are delivered in the week.

In the most ancient times the sermon was usually an exposition of the Gospel or Epistle, or some other portion of the service of the day, and a sermon always preceded the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

The Homilies mentioned in the Rubric are two books of discourses published at different times. The first volume in the reign of Edward VI. (A.D. 1547). The second in the reign of Queen Elizabeth (A.D. 1563). The books were composed on account of the illiterate character of the majority of the clergy at the time of the Reformation who were not supposed to be capable of preaching sermons of their own composition.

It is to be noted that in those times sermons were frequently preached apart from prayers, as at Paul's Cross. The custom is still retained in the University Churches of Oxford and Cambridge, and probably it might still be useful if the plan of

sometimes separating prayers and sermons was carried out in other places.

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*Of the Offertory or Sentences, and the Rubrics  
that follow.*

By the Offertory is meant that part of the Communion Service in which offerings are made. St. Paul in 1 Cor. xvi. commands the making of offerings at the celebration of the Holy Communion. He says: "On the first day of the week (*ie.*, when the Sacrament was administered) let every one lay by him in store as God hath prospered him."

The ancient Fathers, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Cyprian, and Ambrose, testify that it was the custom of the Church to make a collection every Sunday. Certain sentences, most of them taken from the New Testament, are read, according to the discretion of the minister, when the Offertory is made.

The Rubric says that "when these sentences are in reading, the deacons, churchwardens, or other fit persons appointed for that purpose shall receive the alms for the poor and other devotions of the people in a decent bason to be provided by the parish for that purpose, and reverently bring it to

the priest, who shall humbly present and place it on the holy table."

The deacons, if any are present, certainly seem the most proper persons to collect the alms of the congregation, for it was for the very purpose of attending to such matters that they were ordained in the early Church, as related in the sixth chapter of Acts.

The Scotch Liturgy only allows churchwardens to collect when there are no deacons present. The idea of offering alms is connected with the offering of the elements—the bread and wine—the oblations, as they are termed. As so small a quantity of material cannot be the offering of many individuals, it is supplemented by the offering of alms for the use of the poor.

By "other devotions of the people" is evidently meant something distinct from the said alms, such as money offered for the sustentation of the sacred fabric and the maintenance of the Church's services.

The Rubric adds, that where there is a Communion "the priest shall then (*i.e.*, after presenting the bason with the alms) place upon the table so much bread and wine as he shall think sufficient."

This Rubric was inserted at the last review in 1661; and the same time the word "oblations"

was added. So it seems certain that by that word was meant the elements of bread and wine, which the priest is to offer to God in token of His sovereign authority over all His creatures.

In the primitive Church there was generally a side or credence table near the communion table, and it is found in many of our churches at the present day: upon the credence table are placed the sacred elements during the first part of the Communion service.

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*Of the Prayer for the whole state of Christ's Church  
Militant here on Earth.*

When the alms and oblations of bread and wine are placed upon the table, the minister proceeds to offer the prayer for the whole state of Christ's Church Militant, or fighting the good fight of faith here on earth; and this term seems to exclude prayer for the dead, though in this prayer we bless God's Holy Name for all His servants departed this life in His faith and fear, and we pray that we may have grace to follow their good examples.

The latter part of the prayer, which contains the thanksgiving, was added at the last review in 1661.

*The Exhortations.*

Of the three exhortations one, or more usually the first part of the first exhortation, is read on some Sunday or holy day immediately preceding the administration of the Sacrament. The second exhortation is only to be read when the minister sees the people negligent to come to the Holy Communion. The third exhortation is used at the time of the administration, and in it the minister urges the people to two general duties of self-examination and thanksgiving.

In the first Prayer-book of King Edward it was ordered that "as many as shall be partakers of the Holy Communion shall tarry still in the choir, the men on the one side and the women on the other side," it being the custom before the Reformation and in the early Church to allot a distinct place for each sex, and this custom is being revived in many churches at the present day.

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*The Invitation.*

The feast being prepared, and the guests having received instruction, the minister exhorts them "to

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draw near with faith, and to take this Holy Sacrament to their comfort," And he further calls upon them "to make their humble confession to Almighty God meekly kneeling upon their knees."

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*Of the Confession and Absolution.*

The Confession of Sin was compiled by the Reformers, and it with the Absolution are equally beautiful with those appointed for the Morning and Evening Prayer.

The form of Absolution here differs from the one at the beginning of the Prayer-book, and it is not so authoritative in its tone as the form in the service for the Visitation of the Sick.

It is in imitation of the form of blessing used in the Jewish Church, as recorded in the sixth chapter of Numbers: "The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."

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*Of the Sentences from Scripture.*

The use of the comfortable passages is peculiar to the English service, though some of the old Liturgies here have inserted texts of Scripture, but they were taken from the Old Testament and bore little reference to the Lord Jesus Christ, who "came into the world to save sinners" that "all that believe in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

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*Of the Preface or Lauds.*

This holy Sacrament is a Feast of Joy and thanksgiving, and therefore it is called "The Eucharist."

To celebrate the Mystery aright the minister exhorts the communicants to lift up their hearts, and they immediately answer, "We lift them up unto the Lord." These words are of very ancient usage, and are mentioned by Cyril, Cyprian, and Chrysostom, as being part of the Communion service of their times: and so also do they mention the succeeding words, "Let us give thanks unto our Lord God," to which the people reply, "It is

meet and right so to do." After this the minister proceeds with the Eucharist, or great thanksgiving unto God, and the Church directs him to turn himself to the Lord's table and acknowledge in the very words of the ancient Church, "It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God."

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*Of the Hymn called Trisagion.*

The hymn following is called "Trisagion," which in the Greek language means thrice holy, because the word holy is repeated in it three times. The use of this hymn is of very ancient date, for Cyril of Jerusalem, who lived in the fourth century, speaking of the Communion Service of his day, says: "We make mention of the Cherubim and Seraphim whom Isaiah by the Holy Ghost beheld encircling the throne of God, and with two of their wings veiling their countenances, and with two their feet, and with two flying, who cried, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth."

It was the opinion of the early Church that

angels were present at sacred mysteries, and especially during the Holy Communion. Chrysostom says, "Consider, O man, near whom thou standest in these dreadful mysteries, with whom thou art going to worship God, with the Cherubim, Seraphim, and all the powers of heaven."

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*Of the Proper Prefaces.*

In the earliest ages of the Church there was a preface for nearly every Sunday and festival in the year, and it was then the custom to administer the Holy Communion at least every Lord's Day.

In the 12th century the number of prefaces was reduced to ten, but our Reformers have only retained five of the most ancient to be used on the Church's highest festivals and for seven days after each of the days when we commemorate our Saviour's birth, resurrection and ascension into heaven. The preface for Whit Sunday is to be used on the day when we celebrate the outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon the early Church at Pentecost, and for six days after, and there is a preface appointed to be used "Upon the Feast of Trinity only."

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*The Prayer of Access.*

Then succeeds an act of humility which the priest offers up in the name of all those who are about to partake of the Holy Communion. The words seem to be taken from some of the ancient Liturgies, for in the one ascribed to St. James we find such terms as these, "We come to this divine mystery, unworthy indeed, but relying on Thy goodness;" and again, "We trust not in our own righteousness but in Thy mercy."

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*Of the Prayer of Consecration.*

Then the Rubric says, "When the priest standing before the table hath so ordered the Bread and Wine, that he may with the more readiness and decency break the bread before the people and take the cup into his hands, he shall say the prayer of consecration as followeth." This Rubric has lately caused a great deal of controversy. Its plain and natural meaning seems to be that the priest should stand at the middle of the table, looking East, and having so ordered the bread and wine shall without changing his position say the prayer of consecration. The phrase "before

the people" does not seem to warrant the turning round to them whilst breaking the bread and consecrating the wine, but standing before or in front of the people as their representative.

The form of consecration of the Holy Eucharist in the ancient Church was a repetition of our Lord's words of institution, together with prayer to God that He would bless the elements and make them instruments of conveying to all worthy recipients the benefits of the Redeemer's death and passion.

The first marginal direction of the prayer is, "Here shall the priest take the paten into his hands." The paten is the plate on which the bread is laid. In the early Church when Christians were chiefly from the poorer classes, the paten was of wood; afterwards glass patens were used, and now we find in almost every church plates of silver or silver gilt. The priest is then commanded in the Rubric "to break the bread" in accordance with our Saviour's institution, and then saying the words "This is my body which is given for you," he is to lay his hand upon all the bread, and then he is to take the cup into his hand, and when he says "This is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins," he is "to lay his hand

upon every vessel (be it chalice or flagon) in which there is any wine to be consecrated.

The term "Chalice" is from the Latin Calix which means a cup. In the earlier and poorer days of the Church the chalices were composed of wood or of glass. When the great Emperor Constantine became Christian and built a church at Rome, it is recorded that he presented to it a silver paten of great value, and twenty silver chalices weighing three pounds a piece.

When many of his subjects were converted to the faith, the magnificence of the sacred vessels excited the jealousy of the heathen. Vessels of gold soon came into use, and at one of the councils it was remarked "Golden priests formerly used wooden cups, but now wooden priests use golden cups."

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#### *Of the Form of Administration.*

The Rubric says, "Then shall the Minister first receive the Communion in both kinds himself, and then proceed to deliver the same to the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons in like manner if any be present."

In old times all the clergy communicated within

the rails, and the Rubric seems only to extend to such as are so placed. If there happen to be clergymen present, as ordinary members of the congregation, they partake in the order in which they kneel, the priest always beginning to administer the elements at his right hand.

In the middle ages when the Church gradually became more and more corrupt, on account of the early injunction to give the bread and wine first to clergymen who were within the rails, there arose a distinction between ecclesiastical and lay communion, until at last it ended in the Romish error to give communion to the laity in one kind, and to the priests in both kinds. The most ancient form of giving the elements was simply "the body of Christ" and "the blood of Christ" to which the people answered Amen. The usual form in our own country appears to have been, "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life."

When the cup according to the first usage was restored to the laity the forms provided in 1548 were those which are now employed. The Rubric also commands that the elements must be delivered both to the clergy and laity into their hands, instead of taking the consecrated bread as people usually do now in their fingers. And the people

are to receive the Communion "all meekly kneeling." This for very many centuries has always been the custom of the English Church, and it is supposed to be agreeable to the most primitive and apostolic order.

In the ancient Eastern Church, however, the people received the Communion standing, but, as Cyril informs us, it was "with fear and trembling, with silent and downcast eyes, bowing themselves in the posture of worship and adoration."

The indecent and irreverent custom of sitting at the Holy Communion was introduced by the Arians or Unitarians, whose heresy denying the divinity of Christ and therefore allowing such unseemly familiarity with Him, afflicted the Church so much in the earlier centuries.

The Pope who claims to be the successor of St. Peter and the Vicar of Christ, is said to claim the privilege of sitting when communicating: "So that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing Himself that He is God." (2 Thess. ii. 4.) This verse has lately been wonderfully verified in the so-called Œcumenical or General Council which has been held in St. Peter's at Rome.

When all have communicated, the Rubric directs the minister to "return to the Lord's table and reverently place upon it what remaineth of the



consecrated elements, covering the same with a fair linen cloth."

The name for this is the Corporal, and the reason for using it is in memory of the body of our Saviour being wrapped in fine linen at His burial by Joseph of Arimathæa.

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*Of the Lord's Prayer and Prayers after it.*

The Post-Communion, *i.e.*, that which follows the Communion, like the Ante-Communion, that which goes before it, begins with the Lord's Prayer.

The Saviour himself, as St. Matthew records, concluded His last supper with a hymn; and so the Church in every age has been accustomed to conclude the Sacramental Feast with solemn forms of prayer and thanksgiving. The first of these prayers following the precept of St. Paul, who "beseeches us by the mercies of God, that we present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service," is a dedication of ourselves to God. And the second prayer is a petition for divine grace, and that we may continue in "the blessed company of all faithful people," *i.e.*, in the Communion of the Catholic Church, and be fruitful in all good works.

*Of the Gloria in Excelsis.*

The Gloria in Excelsis is sometimes called the Angelic Hymn, because it begins with the words which the Angels sung at our Saviour's birth.

It was called also in the Eastern Church the "Great Doxology" in contrast to the Gloria Patri, or the hymn beginning "Glory be to the Father," which was termed the Lesser Doxology.

The first part from "glory to men" is called the Hosanna, and is, as we know from the Gospel, of heavenly origin. The hymn is of very ancient date, and is said to have been composed in the year of our Lord 139.

In the Roman Liturgy, and in the first Prayer-book of Edward VI., the angelic hymn occurs at the beginning of the Communion Service. In the Greek Church it was constantly used in the public Morning Prayer, and it was introduced into our Liturgy in the reign of Edward VI.

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*The Final Blessing.*

The Rubric then directs "The priest (or Bishop if he be present) shall let them depart with this

blessing." At a council of the Church held A.D. 380, it was decreed "that no one shall presume to go away without the benediction of the priest." Among the Israelites it was the custom to dismiss the congregation with a blessing. Sometimes the king pronounced it, but most usually the priest.

Thus we read that when David removed the ark to Mount Zion after offering burnt-offerings and peace offerings, "he blessed the people in the name of the Lord of hosts."

And when King Solomon dedicated the Temple which he had built "he stood and blessed all the congregation of Israel."

But to bless in the name of the Lord was more especially the office of the priest.

The final blessing in our Communion Service is taken from the Word of God: the former part from St. Paul's writings to the Philippians, and the latter part is a summary of the form of blessing given by God to Moses, and which was always used in the Jewish Church. The words are in the sixth chapter of the Book of Numbers, twenty-fourth and following verses.

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*Of the Occasional Collects.*

Lest there should be anything unasked in this beautiful Communion Service the Church has added six more Collects to be said "as often as occasion shall serve, after the Collects either of Morning or Evening Prayer, Communion, or Litany by the discretion of the minister."

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*The Final Rubrics.*

These were inserted in the year 1552, and take the place of some longer Rubrics which were placed here in the Prayer-book of 1549.

The first Rubric evidently intends that alms should be collected every Sunday from the whole of the congregation, and that all should remain to the end of the prayer for the Church Militant. Then if there be no Communion the congregation is to be dismissed with one or more of the Collects and the Blessing. Then it is said that "there shall be no celebration of the Lord's Supper except there be a convenient number to communicate with the priest, according to his discretion."

And "if there be not above twenty persons of

discretion to receive the Communion, yet there should be no Communion, except four (or three at the least) communicate with the priest."

This is to prevent the practice of what is called "Solitary Mass" in the Church of Rome, where the priest receives the Sacrament himself, though no others are present to communicate with him.

Three communicants at least are necessary, for that number seems to be required by our Saviour to form a congregation.

In cathedrals and colleges a weekly Communion is commanded, "except they have a reasonable cause to the contrary."

The fifth Rubric is designed to take away any scruples which some persons might have about the quality of the bread and wine; some made it essential to have the bread leavened and others unleavened. Our Saviour doubtless took the bread which was ready at hand, and the Rubric simply ordains that the sacramental bread shall be "such as is usual to be eaten, but the best and purest wheat bread that conveniently may be gotten."

And "if any of the bread and wine remain unconsecrated the curate shall have it to his own use." This is a recognition of the principle that "they which minister about holy things live of

things of the temple, and they which wait at the altar are partakers of the altar.”

“If any remain of that which was consecrated it shall not be carried out of the church; but the priest, and such others of the communicants as he shall then call unto him, shall immediately after the blessing reverently eat and drink the same.”

This is to prevent the reservation of elements which is usual among the Papists, and which is wisely forbidden in one of our articles. It was the custom in earlier times to keep back whatever was left of the Sacrament, and to take it to sick and infirm persons who could not attend the church. The custom was abused, and was at length forbidden at one of the Councils of the Church. Of course there could be no need of such a practice in our purer branch of the Church, for in the case of sick and dying people the clergy are obliged to administer the Holy Communion to them in private according to the form provided in the Prayer-book.

The seventh Rubric directs that “the bread and wine for the Communion shall be provided by the curate and churchwardens at the charges of the parish.” In primitive times it was the custom for private individuals to offer the bread for the Holy

Communion. Thus in an old Bidding Prayer of our Church there is a clause, "Ye shall pray for him or for her that this day gave the holy bread." This practice was discontinued on account of its superstitious use; and in the first Prayer-book of King Edward the duty of providing the bread was thrown upon "the Pastors and Curates." But afterwards the Rubric was altered to its present form, and in the twentieth canon it was ordered that "the wine shall be brought to the altar in a metal flagon or cruet, of pewter or silver;" thus forbidding any vessel of common use such as a glass bottle.

The next Rubric declares that "every Parishioner shall communicate at *least* three times in a year, of which Easter is to be one."

In the early Church it was the custom to partake of the Holy Communion every day, and this good practice prevailed, as an ancient Father tells us, for the first three centuries.

As piety began to decline and worldliness to creep into the Church, we find Chrysostom thus complaining: "I often observe a great number flock to hear the sermon, but they fly from the Lord's table: they that are invited come to the feast and sit down; but when the banquet is brought in they superciliously retire."

Then as Church discipline became more lax the celebration of the Holy Communion was less frequent; it degenerated from once a day to once a month. And in our own branch of the Church in the dead period of the Georgian era the Sacrament was in most places administered only about three or four times a year.

Though a great improvement has now taken place, and there are few churches in which there is not a monthly communion, and many in which there is a weekly celebration, that sad age which immediately preceded our own may have in some degree caused the indifference which still unhappily prevails even among professing Christians in reference to their duty to obey their Saviour's last command. Few indeed obey even the narrow demand of the Rubric to communicate at least three times a year, for in most churches whenever the Sacrament is administered the greater number of every congregation turn their backs on the Lord's table.

Another Rubric settles the payment of ecclesiastical duties, ordering that "yearly at Easter every parishioner shall reckon with his parson, vicar, or curate, or his or their deputy or deputies, and pay to them all ecclesiastical duties, accustomedly due, then and at that time to be paid."



These Easter dues are still kept up in some parishes, especially in towns, but as a general rule they have fallen into disuse, though by means of the Easter offerings the laity might certainly do something towards increasing the usually small incomes of the clergy, or at any rate might thereby aid them in the support of their curates. This surely is a lay question, and it ought not to be expected that incumbents should, if desiring to do their duty fully to their parishes, be obliged to meet this extra and heavy charge. However, at present such is the case; and it has been proved that out of the £500,000 per annum provided in England and Wales for the stipends of curates about £400,000 are taken from the small incomes of the incumbents themselves. The last Rubric is concerning the disposal of the money offered at the administration of the Sacrament. This was not added till the last review. The Rubric stands thus: "After the divine service ended, the money given at the Offertory shall be disposed of to such pious and charitable uses as the minister and churchwardens shall think fit, wherein if they disagree, it shall be disposed of as the Ordinary shall appoint."

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*The Declaration on Kneeling.*

A declaration was added to the Prayer-book at the last review in 1661. It was intended as a protest against the Romish and unscriptural doctrine of Transubstantiation, which was unknown in the early Church and seems only to have arisen about the tenth or eleventh century.

That doctrine teaches that "after the words of consecration the whole substance of the bread is converted into the substance of the body of Christ, and the substance of the wine into the substance of His blood; so that the bread and the wine no longer remain, but the body and blood of Christ are substituted in their places."

The doctrine of a real spiritual presence is the doctrine of our English Catholic and Apostolic Church. It teaches that Christ is really received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper, but "only after a heavenly and a spiritual manner." The bread and wine are received naturally: the body and blood of Christ are received spiritually. The Homilies, Articles, and this Rubric at the end of our Communion Service are quite adverse to the low, carnal notion of transubstantiation, and here an explanation is given concerning the posture of kneeling at the Lord's table.

The words showing that the custom is only from a reverent appreciation of these holy mysteries, and that "no adoration is intended, or ought to be done, either unto the sacramental bread or wine there bodily received, or unto any corporal presence of Christ's natural flesh and blood. For the sacramental bread and wine remain still in their very natural substances, and therefore may not be adored; (for that were idolatry, to be abhorred of all faithful Christians); and the natural body and blood of our Saviour Christ are in heaven, and not here; it being against the truth of Christ's natural body to be at one time in more places than one."

## THE MINISTRATION OF PUBLIC BAPTISM OF INFANTS.

The word Baptism is derived from the Greek language and originally means dipping, sprinkling or washing. It has several applications in the writings of the New Testament, as in the case of the baptism of the multitudes in the river Jordan by John the Baptist, of the ceremonial washings of the person and of vessels used for eating.

The word is also applied to the operation of the Holy Spirit on the hearts of the apostles on the day of Pentecost, and to the institution of the Sacrament by our Lord himself when He gave the apostolic commission to His followers, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." Accordingly we find that when St. Peter preached the first gospel sermon on the day of Pentecost, and was the means of convincing multitudes, who enquired of him and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" his immediate answer was, "Repent and be baptized every one of you, for the remission of sins." And the same

day there were added to the Church three thousand souls, and soon afterwards five thousand more.

And so we read of the Roman centurion Cornelius being baptized with his household, and the household of Lydia, and the Philippian gaoler and his family, and the household of Stephanas and many others. And it was the invariable custom in the early Church, on the profession of faith in Christ, to baptize not only the heads of families but their children also. It is quite true that Infant Baptism is not mentioned by name in the New Testament, as no question on the subject ever arose until about three hundred years ago, except a slight controversy in the first or second century as to whether children ought to be baptized on the eighth day after birth or not. Thus showing the universal custom of the primitive Church to baptize infants.

Holy Baptism has taken the place of Circumcision, by which rite Jewish children, though they could have no faith to qualify them, were admitted on the eighth day after birth into their Church.

And not only Circumcision but also Baptism was practised by the Jews; when they admitted proselytes or converts from the heathen to the privileges of the Jewish religion, they baptized all, both male and female, infants and adults. Our

Lord said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven," and the same Divine authority has declared concerning infants, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." If so, they must be capable of baptism both of water and of the Spirit. And again the words of St. Peter are encouragement to us to bring our children to the baptismal Font, for when he exhorted the converts at Jerusalem to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and assured them that they should receive the Holy Ghost, he added "For the promise is to you and to your children."

If we go from Scripture to the writings of the early Fathers we find them all testifying to the then universal practice of the Church.

Justin Martyr, who wrote about A.D. 148, less than fifty years after the death of the last of the apostles, St. John, speaks of persons sixty and seventy years old, who had been made disciples of Christ in their infancy.

Irenæus, who lived soon after the time of Justin, says "Christ came to save all by Himself, all who by Him are regenerated to God, infants and little ones, and boys and youths and old men." Origen a short time after this, writes "Infants are baptized for the remission of sins, for he says none

is free from pollution though his life be but of one day on the earth."

In the early Church it was the custom generally to administer the Sacrament of Baptism, by immersion or dipping, and sometimes a person went into a river as in the case of the Ethiopian eunuch to be baptized. All this could well be done in a hot Eastern climate; and there was a beautiful meaning in this practice of immersion, to which St. Paul alludes in his Epistle to the Romans, "We are buried with Him by Baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

However even in the early Church the practice of immersion was not regarded as absolutely essential. The Philippian gaoler was baptized in the middle of the night in a prison, and the practice could hardly have been carried out in his case. We place no stress upon the amount of water that is used, but on the actual touch of water during the invocation of the Blessed Trinity. Lay Baptism and that performed by those who are not duly ordained has been pronounced valid by the Church if administered in the name of the Trinity, but it should only be resorted to in cases of extreme necessity. If a clergyman has a doubt

whether a person has been properly baptized, he is allowed to use the form, "If thou art not already baptized, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

As to the spiritual blessings resulting from Holy Baptism, they are described in the Prayer-book as "a washing and a sanctifying of the Holy Ghost, a deliverance from the wrath of God, a receiving into the Ark of Christ's Church, a remission of sins by spiritual regeneration, an embracing with the arms of God's mercy, a gift of the blessing of eternal life, a participation of God's everlasting kingdom, a bestowal of the Holy Spirit, a being born again, and made an heir of everlasting salvation, a release from sins, a burial of the old Adam, a raising up of the new man, an enduing with heavenly virtues, a mystical washing away of sin, a grafting into the body of Christ, a death unto sin, and a living unto righteousness, and a putting on the Lord Jesus Christ."

In the Catechism we say of Baptism, "Therein I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." The inward and spiritual grace of this Sacrament is described as "a death unto sin, and a new birth



unto righteousness; for being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace."

St. Paul writing to Titus uses this strong expression, "According to His mercy He saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour: that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

On the subject of Baptismal Regeneration, which has so needlessly and unhappily caused much bitterness and controversy in the present day, we cannot do better than quote from the able and moderate-toned exposition of the thirty-nine Articles by Bishop Harold Browne. Writing on the twenty-seventh Article he says, "We come lastly to speak of what has been most commonly called the special grace of Baptism, viz., Regeneration, or the new birth:—

"If by baptism we are all made "members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven," then are we new born in baptism; for therein are we joined to Christ, cut out of the wild olive tree, and grafted into the good tree, born into the Church, into the family of God as children of our Father which is

in heaven. Moreover, if then the Spirit of God becomes our assured guest and present help, the first germ of spiritual life must be ours; and this is all that is meant by new birth.

“The theology of later days, among Zuinglians and Calvinists, and still more among the Arminians, has attached a different sense to Regeneration; identifying it with conversion or renovation, and denying its existence, except in such persons as attain to a state of true sanctification.

“It is needful here to show; that as Scripture assigns certain graces to Baptism, so it speaks of those graces under the name of Regeneration. In John (chap. iii.) our Lord especially seems to refer to the Jewish language concerning the baptism of proselytes: of them the Jews were wont to say that at their baptism they were born anew, and had entered on a new life; so our Lord says of proselytes to the Gospel or kingdom, that ‘Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;’ and when Nicodemus expresses his astonishment, our Lord says, ‘Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?’ as though the language of his own nation and of the masters in it might have taught him some understanding of the words of Christ. The Calvinistic divines have

followed the Zuinglians in denying that Baptism is here alluded to at all. They think that 'by water and the Spirit,' we must understand only the Spirit which washes with water. But it is a strong argument against this interpretation which is brought by Hooker, and was before him admitted by Zuingle, that 'of all the ancients there is not one to be named that ever did otherwise expound or allege the place than of external Baptism.' When the letter of the law hath two things plainly and expressly specified, Water and the Spirit—Water as a duty required on our parts, the Spirit as a gift which God bestoweth, there is danger in presuming so to interpret it, as if the clause which concerneth ourselves were more than needeth. We may by such rare expositions attain perhaps to be thought witty, but with ill advice.

"If a person has been baptized, but still remains with his carnal nature unrenewed, we are not to conclude that God was unfaithful though the man has been unfruitful. But we are still to look upon that person as practically unregenerate, and we ought to try to bring him to conversion of heart, to a real change of soul and spirit. We may indeed hope that God's Spirit promised in baptism will be ever ready to aid

him when he does not continue obstinately to resist, but we must look that 'Christ should be again formed in him' that he should be 'converted and become as a little child,' before we can pronounce that he is a true Son of God. It has been the custom of the Church to call such a change when wrought after baptism, not 'Regeneration,' but conversion or renewal; but the practical effect is the same, viz. that at conversion that change is really and practically wrought upon the soul, which was not produced at Baptism, but which except for his own fault would have been wrought by the Spirit assured to the baptized."

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*Of the Rubric before the Office.*

In the Ancient Church the Sacrament of Baptism was usually administered at the seasons of Easter and Whitsuntide. At the former in memory of our Saviour's resurrection of which Baptism is a type. At the latter because three thousand souls were converted on the day of Pentecost, and then baptized by the Apostles.

In the Eastern Church the season of Epiphany was also a time appointed for Baptism, because it was supposed that our Lord was then baptized.

About the ninth century it was ordered that the Church should administer Holy Baptism at all seasons of the year. The present Rubric directs that "the people be admonished that it is most convenient that baptism should not be administered but on Sundays and on other Holy-days when the most number of people come together; as well for that the congregation there present may testify the receiving of them that be newly-baptized into the number of Christ's Church; as also because in the baptism of infants every man present may be put in remembrance of his own profession made to God in baptism. For this cause also it is expedient that baptism be administered in the vulgar tongue; nevertheless, if necessity so require, children may be baptized upon any other day."

The next Rubric gives directions about sponsors. It is said "There shall be for every male child to be baptized two godfathers and one godmother, and for every female one godfather and two godmothers." This custom of having sponsors to answer for an infant at baptism is a very ancient one. The Christian Church derived it from the Jews; and in the first centuries, when human life was doubly uncertain and a Christian might any moment be called upon to suffer the death of

martyrdom, it was usual for parents to appoint some of their nearest relations or friends to give security to the Church that the children should be virtuously and Christianly brought up, and not allowed to fall back into heathenism.

The twenty-ninth Canon of the Church declares that "no parent is to be admitted to answer as godfather for his own child." However this rule has lately been relaxed, and on account of the difficulty often experienced in obtaining suitable sponsors, parents are now allowed to act in that capacity. The third Rubric orders that "when there are children to be baptized, the parents shall give knowledge thereof overnight, or in the morning before the beginning of Morning Prayer to the curate."

The godfathers and the godmothers and the people with the children must be ready at the font, (so called, we may suppose, from the Latin word "*Fons*," meaning fount or spring, because baptisms were originally administered in streams.)

The font was at first always placed near the church, but afterwards in the church, and now it is at the lower end of the sacred building, to show that Baptism is the entrance into the Christian Church. The font is alway made of stone, because the water that was a type of Holy

Baptism in the wilderness flowed out of a rock, and Christ who gives the living water is called a Rock.

The latter part of this Rubric ordains that the time for the administration of Baptism is either immediately after the last Lesson at Morning Prayer, or else immediately after the last Lesson at Evening Prayer, as the curate by his discretion shall appoint. This is quite in opposition to the irregular practice which still prevails in many churches, of baptizing children at the end of divine service, when the congregation has departed, and thus reducing the administration of the Sacrament almost to the level of private Baptism. The people with the children being ready, and the "priest coming to the font (which is to be filled with pure water) and standing there shall say, Has this child been already baptized or no?"

The reason of this is, that Baptism must never be repeated, for there is but "one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism." If the people answer, "No," then the priest delivers an exhortation, and offers two prayers. Between these in the Prayer-book of 1549 was asked the name of the child, and a cross was made upon its forehead and breast. A cross is now made when the child is baptized, but only on its forehead. Then when these

prayers are offered the people stand up, and the priest is to read a portion out of the Gospel of St. Mark. And in the exhortation which follows we are reminded that our Saviour Christ commanded the children to be brought to Him, and how He blamed those that would have kept them from Him. And then we thank God for calling us to the knowledge of His grace and faith in Him, and we beg Him to give a fresh proof of His goodness by "giving His Holy Spirit to the infant, that he may be born again, and be made an heir of everlasting salvation." In the old Prayer-book of 1549 it was the custom immediately after the reading of this Collect, for the priest to take the child or children to be baptized from the church-door, where the prayers up to this point had been offered, to the font, saying, "The Lord vouchsafe to receive you into His holy household, and to keep and govern you always in the same, that you may have everlasting life."

The introductory part of the service here ends, and the priest addresses himself to the godfathers and godmothers in accordance with the Scripture, which shows that some form always preceded Baptism, as for instance in the case of the Ethiopian eunuch, to whom when he wished to



be baptized, Philip the deacon said, "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." The vows then to be taken by the sponsors in the name of the child are, first, that of renouncing the devil and all his works, the world and the flesh; then the vow of belief, which is required by our Lord's own words, when He said "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved."

The articles of the Christian Faith are here expressed in the Apostles' Creed. And then after the question, "Wilt thou be baptized in this faith?" the vow of obedience to God's holy will and commandments has to be taken.

In the next place the minister offers four short petitions for the child's sanctification, and the prayer for the consecration of the water is used. And all things being thus prepared for the baptism of the child, the minister is to take it into his hands and to ask the sponsors to name it.

We bring one name into the world which is called our surname, and which is derived from our parents, and which reminds us of our original guilt. But here in Holy Baptism we receive another, which is called our Christian name, to remind us of our new birth, and that we are

enlisted under Christ's banner "to fight manfully against sin, the world, and the devil." Among the ancient heathen there existed a custom something like this. For the Romans gave their children a name on what was called the day of their lustration, when they were cleansed and washed from their pollution. The Greeks also dedicated their infants shortly after birth to their gods; and the Jews, as it is well known, named their children at the time of their circumcision.

After the name is given, the priest, if the godfathers and godmothers "certify him that the child may well endure it, shall dip it in the water discreetly and warily, saying, 'I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:' but if they certify that the child is weak, it shall suffice to pour water upon it, saying the foresaid words."

Dipping was no doubt the most ancient and significant practice in the performing of Holy Baptism; and the immersion of the person points to our dying to sin and our rising again to newness of life. Our Saviour was thus baptized by St. John in the river Jordan.

At the same time the primitive Christians allowed a certain latitude in the administration of the Sacrament, as in the case of the Baptism

of the sick, of want of water and the like, and their custom sometimes was to pour water on the face.

The old Fathers of the Church, especially Tertullian, inform us that it was sometimes the custom to baptize merely with the sprinkling of water, and therefore our Church has left the mode of administration optional; and for convenience sake it is usual to baptize by sprinkling or pouring water on the forehead of the child, unless some special request is made by the parents or sponsors for the dipping it in water. In such an uncertain climate as ours dipping might often be attended with danger, and the real essential part of the Sacrament is the use of water in the name of each Person of the Holy Trinity. The child being thus baptized, and so become a member of the Christian Church, the minister solemnly receives it and signs it on the forehead with the sign of the Cross.

This custom is mentioned in the writings of Basil, Chrysostom, Augustine and others. It is not a superstitious ceremony, but a distinguishing token that the child "shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, but manfully to fight under His banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end."

The lawful use of the Cross in Baptism is fully explained in the thirtieth Canon of the Church, which was framed in the year 1603, as a general reply to the extreme Puritans, who were unreasonable on this point as well as on most other subjects connected with the Church.

The use of the Lord's Prayer after the baptism is most proper, for when can we more suitably call God our Father in regard to the infant than when it has been made "a child of God and a member of Christ."

In the prayer that follows the effect of Holy Baptism is shown: "Seeing that it hath pleased Thee to regenerate this infant with Thy Holy Spirit, to receive him for Thine own child by adoption, and to incorporate him into Thy Holy Church." This part of the Baptismal Service was objected to by the Puritans at the revision of 1661. They urged, "We cannot in faith say that every child that is baptized is regenerated by God's Holy Spirit; at least it is a matter of question, and therefore we wish to have the word 'regenerated' expunged."

But the Bishops replied that "Baptism is our spiritual regeneration, and that by it is received remission of sins; seeing that God's sacraments have their effects where the receiver does not put

any bar against them (which children cannot do), we may say in faith of every child that is baptized that it is regenerated by God's Holy Spirit, and the denial of it tends to Anabaptism and the contempt of this holy sacrament as nothing worthy, nor material whether it be administered to children or no."

A good writer of our Church on this point remarks, "St. Paul styles baptism 'the washing of regeneration' (Titus ii. 5); because in baptism the Holy Spirit works in us a change something like a new birth, translating us from a natural state in Adam to a spiritual state in Christ, both the water and the spirit at the same time concurring to this new birth. For, as we are but once born into our natural life; so we are but once born into our spiritual or Christian life; we are but once baptized and once regenerated, regenerated at the very time we are baptized. This is the language of Scripture; thus this term was applied by the ancient Fathers, and thus it is used by our Church. So that to speak of a Christian's being regenerated in any other stage of his life, or to apply the term of regeneration or new birth to the turning from a lapse state to a state of holiness, to that renovation, amendment, or renewal of the heart of man, which is the duty of a Christian, and which the Word of God

exhorts us to acquire; to make it signify conversion or repentance, is, if there were no worse consequences attending it, mixing and confounding distinct notions, misapplying Scripture phrases, and abusing the ancient and known language of the Church."

The Baptismal Service concludes with an exhortation to the sponsors to see that the infant be taught the nature of the vows which they have taken for it. Of course the responsibility of God-parents is restricted as long as the parents of the child are alive, for it is their natural and plain duty to attend to its Christian education.

In the last place the minister reminds the sponsors to take care that the child, when properly instructed in its religious duties, be brought to the bishop to be confirmed by him.

In the first Book of Common Prayer this office ended with the words, "So let the congregation depart in the name of the Lord."

### THE MINISTRATION OF PRIVATE BAPTISM IN HOUSES.

The title of this Office in the Prayer-books of King Edward VI. and Queen Elizabeth was, "Of them that be baptized in private houses in time of necessity." The addition was made in King James's reign—"by the minister of the parish, or any other lawful minister that can be procured." At the Restoration of Charles II. the title was altered to its present form. In this service the Rubric directs the minister "to use the Lord's Prayer and so many of the Collects appointed to be said in the time of public Baptism as the time and present exigence will suffer."

And the child being named by some one present he is to pour water upon it, the order for dipping being omitted on account of the presumed weakness of the child. After it is baptized the minister is to give thanks in the words which are used in the service for Public Baptism.

The remaining part of the office is performed if the child recovers and is brought into the church to be publicly admitted.

After the minister has certified, in case the child was not baptized by himself, that after making due enquiries all was well done concerning the baptizing of the child, he reads the Gospel and the exhortation, and then repeats the Lord's Prayer, and the Collect that in the Office for Public Baptism follows the exhortation. Then after demanding the name of the child, he proceeds to question the sponsors, and he is then received into the congregation of Christ's flock and signed with the sign of the Cross, and the service has the same conclusion as the office for public Baptism.

And here is a provision made for conditional Baptism: "If they which bring the infant to church do make such uncertain answers to the priest's questions as that it cannot appear that the child was baptized with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (which are essential parts of Baptism), then the priest is to baptize it in the form before appointed for Public Baptism of Infants, saving that, at the dipping of the child into the font he is to use this form of words: "If thou art not already baptized, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."



THE MINISTRATION OF BAPTISM TO SUCH AS ARE  
OF RIPER YEARS AND ABLE TO ANSWER FOR  
THEMSELVES.

There was no such office as this in the Liturgy till the last review. In the early Church of course a great number of those who were baptized, being converts from heathenism or Judaism, were adults; but when the nations were converted to the Christian faith only children were baptized. An office for adult baptism therefore did not seem necessary to the Church of England at the Reformation, when no controversy on this subject had arisen. It was only during the unhappy period of the Great Rebellion, when numerous dissenting sects arose, such as the Quakers and Anabaptists, who refuse baptism to their children, that the want of such an office as this appeared.

In the preface of the Prayer-book in 1661 it was stated that, among other alterations, it was thought expedient to add, "An office for the Baptism of such as are of riper years; which, although not so necessary when the former book was compiled, yet by the growth of Anabaptism through the licen-

tiousness of the times crept in among us, is now become necessary and may be always useful for the baptizing of natives in our plantations and others converted to the faith."

The service for Adult Baptism differs from that for Infant Baptism, only in three particulars: (1) The person to be baptized answers for himself; (2) The priest takes him by the right hand and brings him to the font; "placing him conveniently by the font;" (3) An address to the newly-baptized follows the short one which is made to the sponsors.

## A CATECHISM,

THAT IS TO SAY,

AN INSTRUCTION TO BE LEARNED OF EVERY PERSON,  
BEFORE HE BE BROUGHT TO BE CONFIRMED  
BY THE BISHOP.

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Catechism is derived from a Greek word, and means instruction by word of mouth, in such a way as to bring out a reply or echo. In the earliest ages of the Church catechising was much used for the purpose of conveying religious instruction, and this custom is especially shown in the writings of St. Augustine, (A.D. 400) and in those of Cyril of Jerusalem, who delivered a series of catechetical lectures about the year 347. The custom seems to have been derived from the Jews, for in the only incident that is related of our Saviour's childhood, we read of His being found by Mary and Joseph in the Temple, "sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions."

In the Early British Church, expounding the Creed and the Lord's Prayer formed the principal part of catechising, and the Canons of the Saxon Church required the Clergy "to learn and to teach the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed." In the dark middle ages the practice of catechising was disused, for one of our homilies says, "It served the crafty purpose of the Bishops of Rome to keep all people so blind, that they, not knowing what they prayed, what they believed, what they were commanded by God, might take all their commandments for God's; as they would not suffer the Holy Scriptures or Church Service to be used or had in any other language than the Latin, so were very few even of the most simple people taught the Lord's Prayer, the articles of the Creed, and the Ten Commandments otherwise than in Latin, which they understood not; by which universal ignorance all men were ready to believe whatsoever they said, and to do whatsoever they commanded."

At the Reformation it was an especial care of the principal divines who guided that great movement, to provide a Catechism in English for the instruction of youth, and accordingly a set of injunctions was framed by Archbishop Cranmer, and issued under the authority of Henry VIII., and

the clergy were commanded to take care that children were taught the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments in their mother tongue. In 1548 the Catechism, with the exception of the latter part which relates to the Sacraments, was drawn up nearly in its present form. It is said by some to have been composed by Alexander Nowell, who was second Master of Westminster School at the time the Prayer-book was compiled, and afterwards Dean of St. Paul's from 1560 to 1602. Others have attributed its authorship to Bishop Poynet, who was promoted to the See of Rochester in the year 1550, at the early age of thirty-three, and who was one of Archbishop Cranmer's chaplains. Dr. Goodrich who about the same time was Bishop of Ely, is also supposed to have written some portion of the Catechism.

The latter part was added after the Hampton Court Conference by the authority of King James I., and this addition was drawn up by Bishop Overall, who at that time was Dean of St. Paul's.

The Catechism was obviously framed on the basis of the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and at the end was added an explanation of the two sacraments, generally

necessary to salvation, viz., Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

It is a summary of divinity, but it is not intended to exhaust every question, for when the Puritans complained at the Savoy Conference that it did not fully enter into the doctrines of our justification, sanctification, etc., the Bishops replied, "The Catechism is not intended as a whole body of divinity, but as a comprehension of the articles of faith and other doctrines most necessary to salvation."

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*Of the Rubrics after the Catechism.*

Unfortunately public catechising has in our Church in a great measure fallen into disuse, and this may account for the lamentable ignorance which prevails among regular Church attendants, about the principal doctrines of our holy religion.

However, the first Rubric enjoins that "the curate of every Parish shall diligently upon Sundays and Holy-days, after the second Lesson at Evening Prayer, openly in the Church instruct and examine so many Children of his Parish sent unto him, as he shall think convenient, in some parts of the Catechism."

The second Rubric requires that "All fathers, mothers, masters, and dames, shall cause their children, servants, and apprentices, (which have not learned their Catechism,) to come to the Church at the time appointed, and obediently to hear, and be ordered by the curate, until such time as they have learned all that is here appointed for them to learn."

In the days of Church discipline, it was required by the Canons of 1571, that every rector, vicar, or parish priest, should return to the bishop or his chancellor every year within twenty days after Easter, the names of all in the parish as had not sent their children or servants at the time appointed, and it was a rule that "He whose child at the age of ten years or upwards was not able to say the Catechism, should pay ten shillings to the poor box, the like penalty to be inflicted upon masters and mistresses, who had servants of fourteen years and upwards that could not say the Catechism by heart." The last two Rubrics refer more to the order of Confirmation which has now to be considered."

**OF THE ORDER OF CONFIRMATION,  
OR LAYING ON OF HANDS UPON THOSE THAT ARE BAPTIZED  
AND COME TO YEARS OF DISCRETION.**

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Though Confirmation was not like the two Sacraments ordained by Christ Himself, it is of apostolic origin.

It was the practice in the earliest ages of the Church, and ever since, to bring baptized persons when they arrived at years of discretion to the bishop to receive his benediction; and it is not usual to admit any one to the Holy Communion until they have been confirmed, or are at least ready to be confirmed.

The origin of Confirmation seems to date from Jewish times, when it was the custom to present children of twelve in the temple at Jerusalem, to receive the blessing of the elders; and thus we read of our Saviour himself conforming to the Jewish law. After the descent of the Holy Ghost on the members of the early Church on the day



of Pentecost, they preached the Gospel and baptized. The inferior ministers were allowed to do this, but "when the apostles heard that Samaria had received the Word of God," through the instrumentality of Peter, the deacon and evangelist, "they sent them Peter and John, who when they were come down prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost; for as yet He was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of Jesus. Then laid they hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost." In the same way we are told in the nineteenth chapter of Acts, St. Paul laid his hands on the converts at Ephesus, who had been baptized by John the Baptist in the name of the Lord Jesus." The rite is also referred to by the same inspired apostle in his Epistle to the Hebrews, where he speaks in the sixth chapter of "the doctrine of Baptisms and laying on of hands."

In the early Church, on special days when Holy Baptism was administered, the baptized immediately on coming out of the water were presented to the bishop to be confirmed. Tertulian says, that "as soon as they came up out of the water of Baptism they were anointed with consecrated unction; there they received imposition

of hands, and the Holy Spirit was invoked, and invited by a benediction.

Cyprian, shewing that the rite of Confirmation came from the apostles, says, "Our practice (that is, in the Church of Carthage, of which he was bishop) is, that they who are baptized be presented to the rulers of the Church, that by our prayer and laying on of hands they may receive the Holy Ghost, and be consummated with the seal and signature of the Lord."

In the earlier ages of the Church it was also the custom to administer the Holy Communion as well as Confirmation to the newly baptized.

"The flesh is washed (says Tertullian) that the soul may be purified; the flesh is overshadowed with the imposition of the hand, that the soul may be illuminated by the Spirit; the flesh feeds on the body and the blood of Christ, that the soul may receive nutriment from God."

In the Greek Church, and, indeed, in some portion of the Apostolic Church, it was the custom to confirm and administer the Lord's Supper to infants. Cyprian, Augustine, and others, having so misunderstood that saying of our Lord, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you," as to suppose that the Eucharist was to be given to unconscious

infants as well as to grown-up persons. And in England in the thirteenth century, and also in later times, the children were confirmed before they were five years old, when of course they could not understand the meaning of the office, and the duties it required.

Thus in Miss Strickland's *Life of Queen Elizabeth* we read—"Notwithstanding the bitter disappointment felt by King Henry at the sex of the infant, a solemn Te Deum was sung at her birth, and the preparations for her christening were made. The solemnization of that sacred rite was appointed to take place on Wednesday the tenth day of September, the fourth day after the birth of the infant princess. The Bishop of London performed the ceremony. After Elizabeth had received her name, a flourish of trumpets sounded and the royal child was borne to the altar, the Gospel was read over her, and she was confirmed by Cranmer."

The Rubric at the end of the Catechism says, "So soon as children are come to a competent age, and can say in their mother tongue the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and also can answer to the other questions of this short Catechism, they shall be brought to the bishop." The Church has nowhere defined what

is meant by "years of discretion," or by a "competent age."

The usual rule with our bishops is not to admit young people to Confirmation until they have attained the age of fourteen or sixteen years.

The value of this holy Ordinance as a means of grace, and its relation to Baptism, cannot be better explained than by quoting a passage which Blunt has placed in his Annotated Book of Common Prayer, which he quotes from Folthergill's MS. annotations of the Prayer-book preserved in the library of York Minster.

"In Baptism he was born again spiritually to live, in Confirmation he is made bold to fight. There he received remission of sin: here he receiveth increase of grace. There the Spirit of God did make him a new man: here the same Spirit doth defend him in his dangerous conflict. There he was washed and made clean: here he is nourished and made strong.

"In Baptism he was chosen to be God's son, and an inheritor of His heavenly kingdom. In Confirmation God shall give him His Holy Spirit to be his mentor to instruct and perfect him, that he lose not by his folly that inheritance unto which he is called. In Baptism he was called and chosen to be one of God's soldiers, and had

his white coat of innocency delivered unto him, and also his badge, which was the red cross, the instrument of His Passion, set upon his forehead and other parts of his body.

“In Confirmation he is encouraged to fight, and take the armour of God put upon him, which is able to bear off the fiery darts of the devil, and to defend him from all harm, if he will use them in his battle, and not put himself in danger of his enemies by entering the field without them.”

According to the sixtieth Canon, the rite of Confirmation is to be performed at least once in three years, but in most dioceses it is more frequently administered.

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### *Of the Order of Confirmation.*

The Rubric says, “Upon the day appointed, all that are to be then confirmed being placed and standing in order before the bishop, he (or some other minister appointed by him) shall read this preface following.”

The end of Confirmation being made known, the highest minister of the Church then asks

the candidates the solemn question, whether "in the presence of God, and the congregation, they will renew their baptismal vows, and ratify and confirm the same in their own persons," and to this every one is expected audibly to answer "I do."

Then follow some short versicles and responses with which the order for Confirmation anciently began, and the bishop invites the people to join with him in prayer to God, that He who had "vouchsafed to regenerate" those who are about to be confirmed by water and the Holy Ghost, and had given to them forgiveness of all their sins, would now strengthen them with the Holy Ghost the Comforter, and daily increase in them His manifold gifts of grace." The prayer desires the sevenfold grace of the Holy Spirit, and has been offered in the Church of England for a period of at least 1150 years. Then the Rubric directs "all of them in order kneeling before the bishop, he shall lay his hand upon the head of every one severally." This is one of the most ancient ceremonies in the world. In the Book of Genesis we read of the patriarch Jacob on his dying bed laying his hands on Ephraim and Manasseh the sons of Joseph and blessing them.

In the Book of Numbers we read of Moses by God's command laying his hand on the head of Joshua who was to succeed him in the leadership of Israel.

Our Blessed Redeemer laid His hands on the heads of little children, and so He made whole those who came to Him to be healed of divers diseases; and the same power He gave to His apostles when He said "They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." And at the time of His ascension, it is said "He lifted up His hands and blessed them; and it came to pass while He blessed them, He was parted from them and carried up into heaven." Afterwards the apostles, following such divine and sacred practices, continued the rite of the imposition of hands, and their successors in the highest office of the Church have retained that ancient and apostolic use, and pray that the persons on whom they lay their hands may "be defended with God's heavenly grace, and may continue His for ever, and daily increase in His Holy Spirit more and more until they come to His everlasting kingdom."

After this in the first service book when "Peace be with you" was said by the bishop, he gave a slight blow on the cheek, to signify that the person confirmed was to be a faithful servant of

Christ, and to be ready to suffer affronts for His sake. This order was removed from the Prayer-book in 1552, and the Lord's Prayer was first inserted in the Confirmation office in 1661.

It ends with two most suitable prayers, and the blessing given by the bishop, and the last Rubric orders that "none shall be admitted to the Holy Communion until such time as he be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed."

This last clause was added by the Presbyterian divines when a conference was held, and the Prayer-book was reviewed in 1661.



## THE FORM OF SOLEMNIZATION OF MATRIMONY.

The holy state of matrimony was instituted in the time of man's innocency by God himself, for we read at the very beginning of the Bible that when the Lord had created Adam, He pronounced that it was "not good for man to be alone," and "He therefore made a help-meet for him."

Among heathens and Jews, marriage has almost always been performed with religious rites; and so among Christians from the earliest ages of the Church to the present time, the marriage ceremony has been usually performed by an ecclesiastical minister. "It is proper (says Ignatius,) that the parties marrying should be united by the bishop's consent, that the marriage may be according to the Lord, and not according to concupiscence."

Tertullian says that "clandestine marriages, *i.e.* such as were not professed before the Church, were in danger of being pronounced adulterous." Other fathers of the Church speak of the benediction of the priest, and of his joining together the right hands of the bridegroom and the bride.

In our own Church before a marriage can be performed, banns, or public proclamations as the

word signifies, must be published in the Church unless a faculty or license has been obtained.

This practice of publishing banns is a very ancient one, and is intended to prevent if possible clandestine marriages. If a clergyman were to marry any persons without banns or a licence, he is subject to the penalty of being suspended for three years.

The licence is an episcopal dispensation, and has been granted by English Bishops since the fourteenth century; and the power of granting licences was confirmed at the Reformation by an act of parliament in the reign of Henry VIII.

Special licences, which allow persons to be married at any time or at any place, are only granted by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and they were originally the privilege of the primates as the Legates of the Pope.

Otherwise the canonical time for celebrating marriages is between the hours of eight and twelve in the forenoon. A marriage is not to be solemnized except within three months after the date of the licence or last publication of banns.

The Rubric states that "If the persons that are to be married dwell in divers parishes, the banns must be asked in both parishes, and the curate of the one parish shall not solemnize matrimony

betwixt them, without a certificate of the banns being thrice asked from the curate of the other parish."

The last Rubric before the Preface, orders that "at the day and time appointed for solemnization of matrimony, the persons to be married shall come into the body of the Church with their friends and neighbours, and there standing together, the man on the right hand, and the woman on the left, the priest shall say, 'Dearly beloved, we are gathered together,' " etc.

Marriages are now allowable at all seasons of the year; but it is not usual for religious persons to enter the state of matrimony during the penitential season of Lent; and as early as the fourth century, one of the Councils of the Church forbade the celebration of marriages at that period.

At the day and time appointed, the persons to be married are directed by the Rubric to come "into the body of the Church."

The custom formerly was for the bridegroom and bride to stand at the church door, where the priest performed the greater part of the matrimonial office. This custom is mentioned by the Poet Chaucer when speaking of his wife at Bath.

" She was a worthy woman all her live  
Husbands at the church door had she five."

It is the general practice now to perform all the service in the chancel, though I believe the older custom is still retained in some parts of England. The Rubric further says that the persons to be married are to come into the church "with their friends and neighbours."

Marriages are always supposed to be celebrated in the face of the Church, and the Law tries to prevent anything like secrecy in the performance of the rite.

The friends and neighbours are present to give their assent to the union, and some are required as witnesses to sign the register according to the law. The last part of the Rubric mentions the position in which the parties are to stand at the time of marriage, "the man standing on the right hand, and the woman on the left," because the right hand is the more honourable place, and therefore it is given to the man as the head of the wife.

At the time of the celebration of a marriage the minister first addresses the congregation, and declares the purpose for which they are gathered together.

He then enumerates the principal ends for which matrimony was ordained; and speaking to the persons to be married, he gives them a

solemn charge, that if they know any impediment why they may not be lawfully joined together in matrimony they are to confess it.

If no impediment is alleged, then the curate proceeds to what are termed the espousals; the mutual consent of the parties is asked, without which the marriage would not be good, and the declaration is so worded as to form a promise of fulfilling the duties of the married state. To the questions of the minister both the man and the woman answer, "I will," the former promising love, comfort, honour, maintenance, and fidelity; the latter promising in return obedience, love, honour, and also fidelity.

This declaration of mutual consent seems to be the remains of an old form of espousals, which somewhat answer to our modern term engagement, and which took place some weeks or months, and even years before marriage.

As soon as this mutual consent is given the minister is instructed to ask, "Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?" and then he receives the bride from the hands of her father, or from some one deputed in his stead. This part of the ceremony shows the father's consent, and that he gives up the authority he before possessed to the husband, and that he resigns her to God, and

that it is God who, through the means of His Church, provides a wife for the man as He did at the beginning of the world for Adam. Then the minister gives the man to the woman, and afterwards the woman to the man, by causing each of them to take the other by the right hand. This is the ceremony of plighting their troth. The joining of hands has in all ages been commonly used in contracting friendships or agreements, and the right hand especially was deemed so sacred that Cicero calls it "the witness of our faith." Joining of hands in marriage appears to have been the custom of the heathen and the Jews, and to have been retained in the early Christian Church.

They also adopted, as being an innocent custom, the old heathen practice of veiling the bride, and this has also come down to the present day.

Tertullian says, "Among the heathen the virgin was brought veiled to the man when they made their espousals. She was veiled because she was to be joined to a man both in body and spirit by a kiss and by joining of hands, which was the first resignation of virgin modesty."

After the solemn promises have been mutually made, the man gives and the woman receives a ring, which he puts on the fourth finger of the left hand. The use of a ring in the marriage contract

is at least as old as the days of Isaac, who sent Rebekah bracelets and rings in token of espousal. (Genesis xxiv.) In very early times the giving of a ring was a token of investing a person with dignity and power. Thus in the Book of Genesis we read, that when King Pharaoh elevated Joseph he took the ring off his own hand and put it on Joseph's hand.

Among the old Romans the giving of a ring was customary. Thus Juvenal the poet speaks of a ring "as a pledge given to the finger."

And Tertullian, in denouncing the luxury of the heathen of his day, says that "the ancient institutions of their forefathers which countenanced female modesty and sobriety were cast aside; for in those days no woman was permitted to wear gold except on one finger only, which the husband had pledged to himself by the marriage ring." The giving of a ring, then, was continued when the Christian Church was founded, and the practice also now prevails among modern Jews, who received it from their forefathers.

And it is to us "a token and a pledge of the vow and covenant made," and being round, having no beginning or end, it was looked upon as an emblem of eternity and constancy, and as a sign

that the matrimonial love never should have an end. The man, holding the ring on the finger, and taught by the priest, says, "With this ring I thee wed, with my body I thee worship, and with all my worldly goods I thee endow, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

The word worship, originally worth-ship, simply means to honour, to reverence, to pay due respect. Some persons object to its insertion here, but it is only liable to objection on account of its being too old-fashioned.

Worship now refers to God, but in ancient times it was frequently used in regard to man. Thus in Wickliffe's translation of the Bible we find: "If any man serve me, my Father shall worship Him." (John xii. 26). And in Matthew xix. 19: "Worship thy father and thy mother." And in 1 Samuel ii. 30, the passage which is now "Them that honour Me I will honour," in Cranmer's version stood, "I will worship."

In modern times we are accustomed to style the mayor of a borough, or the magistrate on the bench, "your worship." At the Savoy Conference the Puritans objected to retaining the old word "worship" and wished to substitute "honour" in its stead. It was agreed that the alteration should



be made, but unfortunately the Committee of Revision changed their minds and allowed the old word to remain.

The ceremony of marriage is thus completed by the giving of a ring and a solemn invocation of the name of the Holy Trinity. In all that follows, the man and woman receive the blessing of the Church and its ratification of their contract. Then the Rubric enjoins that they shall both kneel down and the minister shall say the benedictory prayer; and when that is offered the priest, joining their right hands together, adopts the words of the Saviour Himself—"Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder."

Then addressing himself to the congregation he declares to them that everything essential to the validity of the marriage is complete, and he pronounces the parties to be "man and wife together in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." After this the minister adds a blessing which has been composed much after the fashion which God Himself ordained for the priests to bless the congregation of Israel.

The older blessing of the first Prayer-book of King Edward VI. was as follows: "God the Father bless you, God the Son keep you, God the Holy Ghost lighten your understanding. The

Lord mercifully with His favour look upon you, and so fill you with all benediction and grace that you may have remission of your sins in this life and in the world to come life everlasting."

All that is necessary for the validity of a marriage is now complete, yet before the congregation is dismissed one of two Psalms is to be said or sung, and some petitions are to be offered and an exhortation to be read. The Rubric requires that at this point of the service the minister and clerks are to go to the Lord's Table, and when the Psalm is ended, the man and the woman kneeling before the table, the priest standing at the table and turning his face towards them, shall say some versicles and the Lord's Prayer. It is evident from this Rubric that the clergy, choir, bridegroom and bride and the bridal party used to move up from the body of the church where the first part of the service had been performed and took their places in the chancel for the purpose of finishing the service by partaking of the Holy Communion.

Until 1661 the Rubric stood thus: "The new married persons (the same day of their marriage) must receive the Holy Communion." Now the Rubric is as follows: "It is convenient that the new married persons should receive the Holy Communion at the time of their marriage or at the first

opportunity after their marriage." The alteration was made to meet the wishes of the Presbyterian Commissioners at the Savoy Conference. The Marriage Service concludes with an exhortation if there be no sermon. It is taken from those passages of St. Peter and St. Paul which set forth first the duties of husbands to their wives, and then the duties which wives owe to their husbands.

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### THE ORDER FOR THE VISITATION OF THE SICK.

The duty of visiting and helping the sick is a work of charity which ought to be performed by all Christians, but it is specially enjoined in the New Testament on those who have the cure of souls. St. James writes, "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he has committed sins they shall be forgiven him."

The visitation of the sick therefore is not a mere act of neighbourly kindness, but an act of religion; and from this passage we see that it is the duty of the sick person to call in the clergyman, for he may often, especially if he has a large parish, be ignorant of the sick person's trouble, and may, if knowing of the existence of a sick case, not be aware of the particular time when it will be most convenient to receive his ministry.

It is the sick person's duty, then, to call in the minister, and the minister to go at once when

called in. The English Church has provided this form for the visitation of the sick to be used at the discretion of the minister, but it does not bind him always to use it as his guide and manual of devotion in his visits to the sick and afflicted.

There is one part of the ancient form which is properly omitted in our reformed Liturgy, viz., that of anointing the sick with oil, or as it is called in the Roman Catholic Church, "extreme unction."

In the early Church, when Christianity was confirmed by many miracles, it was the custom to anoint the sick with oil, and thereby to restore him to health and strength. So long as miraculous powers remained in the Church it was a duty to retain this custom, but when those powers ceased it was of course necessary that this practice should cease also. The extreme unction of the Romish Church seems to bear little resemblance to the apostolic anointing. For the oil blessed by the bishop is only applied by the priest when a person is past all hope of recovery, and it is supposed to convey pardon of sins and divine support in a dying hour. Extreme unction is one of the seven sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church. It was not regarded as a sacrament by our English Reformers, but they retained the custom in the first Prayer-book, allowing it to be used, "if the

sick person desired it," with a prayer for the forgiveness of sin and restoration to health.

Archbishop Cranmer expressed an opinion that "Unction of the sick with oil to remit venial sins, as it is now used, is not spoken of in Scripture, nor in any ancient author."

Therefore all reference to the custom was omitted when the second Prayer-book of Edward VI. was issued. The minister of the parish coming into the sick man's house is directed by the Rubric to say, "Peace be to this house and to all that dwell in it." This is the salutation which our Lord commanded His apostles to use. The words are appropriate to the affliction and trouble which prevail, and tend to allay disquietude and anxiety; but they are especially meant to convey to the inmates that the minister comes to them, not merely as an ordinary friend for the purposes of condolences, but as the messenger of Him who said to His ministers, "My peace I leave with you."

In the Prayer-book of 1549 the office commenced with one of the Penitential Psalms—the cxliii., but at the review it was left out, and a petition out of the Litany inserted in its stead. This is very suitable, and reminds the sick person, and any that are present with him, that God's

anger is frequently shewn by infliction of bodily chastisement, and therefore they pray the Lord not to remember their own and their forefathers' iniquities, but to spare them through the most precious blood of the Redeemer; and as all who of old came to Jesus used to cry; Have mercy on us, so do we here call for mercy on each Person of the Holy Trinity: and then the Lord's Prayer is offered here, as in every other service, on account of its Divine authorship, and its prevailing power with God.

This is followed by some few versicles in which all who are present are to join with the minister in behalf of the sick. These short petitions are taken from Psalms xx., lxi., lxxxvi., and lxxxix. In the old service book, that of Sarum, which was used before the Reformation, nine Collects followed here, but only two of them have been translated and retained. The Collect now used first was the last of the series. The opening sentence of it, "O Lord, look down from heaven, visit and relieve this Thy servant," is no doubt taken from Holy Scripture. Thus in Deuteronomy xxvi. 15: "Look down from Thy holy habitation from heaven, and bless Thy people Israel."

And King Solomon at the dedication of the Temple prayed, "Whatsoever sickness there be,

then hear Thou in heaven, and forgive." The next prayer is the third of the Sarum series. In the original the miraculous cures of St. Peter's wife's mother, and of the Centurion's servant, are mentioned.

These were omitted at the last Revision of the Prayer-book.

The former prayer sought comfort and help for the sick person in his affliction. This proceeds to ask that the Almighty will sanctify it to him; and since the issues of life and death rest with the merciful God and Saviour, the Collect prays that in case of restoration to former health the sick person may lead the residue of his life in the fear of God and to His glory. Or in case the sickness ends this painful life, that he may dwell for ever with God in life everlasting, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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### *Of the Exhortation.*

Exhortation after prayer is an old custom of the Church. For it is the minister's office to exhort his people in the time of health, but especially in that of sickness.

This exhortation is divided into two parts, the



former of which need only be used if the person is very sick.

The first sets forth the cause and purposes of sickness, and shows that it is God's visitation, and that if it is received in submission to His will, it will turn to the sufferer's profit and help him forward in the right way that leadeth unto everlasting life.

The second part is founded on Heb. xii. 6—10, and exhorts the sick person to patience by the example of Christ, and also to self-examination and faith. The sufferer is reminded of the continued obligation of his baptismal vows, and of the account which is to be one day rendered to the Righteous Judge as to the way they have been performed.

And because one part of the vows was to "believe all the articles of the Christian Faith," the minister enquires of the sick man, whether he believes the articles of the Apostles' Creed. This form has been inserted in the Visitation Service on account of its great conciseness, and as containing all things necessary to be believed by a Christian man.

Then the Rubric says "the minister shall examine whether he repent him truly of his sins," for "all have sinned" and need repentance, and he

requires to be satisfied of his repentance before he can render him any spiritual consolation. Then he is to examine "whether he be in charity with all the world, exhorting him to forgive from the bottom of his heart all persons who have offended him."

The duty of forgiveness is taught by our Lord in His incomparable prayer, and also in the parable of the 10,000 talents. (Matt. xviii.) And by His own example when dying on the Cross, He prayed for His bloodthirsty murderers, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

And beside the sick person's forgiving those that have offended him, "if he has offended any other, he must ask them forgiveness, and where he hath done injury or wrong to any man, he must also make amends to the uttermost of his power."

Our Saviour did not receive the publican Zaccheus among His disciples, until he had declared, that "if he had done wrong to any one, he restored fourfold." And then the minister is to exhort the sick person, that "if he hath not before disposed of his goods, let him then be admonished to make his will, and to declare his debts what he oweth, and what is owing to him

to the better discharging of his conscience, and the quietness of his executors."

This might appear to some too worldly a matter to be the subject of a death-bed exhortation ; but it is really most important, seeing the many jealousies and quarrels which often arise in families, from the fact of no disposition of property having been made, for the minister of the Church to remind a sick person of the need of settling his affairs, so that his own mind may be more fitted to think of heavenly things, and that after his death, dissensions among his relations may, if possible, be avoided.

However, this weighty matter ought not really to be deferred to a dying hour, and the Rubric wisely enjoins, that "men should often be put in remembrance to take order for the settling of their temporal estates while they are in health." The sick man's affairs being settled, the minister is directed "earnestly to move him, if he be of ability to be liberal to the poor. He is to be urged to the Christian duty of almsgiving only on proper principles, the minister taking care to explain to him, that no works of our own can purchase salvation, and that it is obtained "without money, and without price," but at the same time, good works are the proofs of our faith in

Christ, through whom we are justified and saved, and that the apostle has said, "to do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." And besides, "the sick person is to be moved to make a special confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter."

On account of the manifold abuses of confession in the Roman Catholic Church, the custom has in a great degree fallen into disuse in our Church since the Reformation.

The Church of England neither allows it to be a Sacrament, nor requires it to be used as generally necessary, but the Exhortation to the Communion Service says, "Because it is requisite that no man should come to the Holy Communion, but with a full trust in God's mercy, and with a quiet conscience; therefore if there be any of you who by this means cannot quiet his conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me, or to some other discreet and learned minister of God's Word, and open his grief; that by the ministry of God's Holy Word he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his conscience, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness"

And in the second part of the Homily on Repentance, it is said, "If any do find themselves troubled in conscience, they may repair to their learned curate or pastor, or to some other godly learned man, and show the trouble and doubt of their conscience to them, that they may receive at their hand the comfortable salve of God's Word."

It is clear, then, that if any sick or dying persons has any particular sin which troubles his mind, the minister is not to refuse hearing his confession of it, and on his showing evidence of repentance and faith, which are the conditions of our pardon and salvation, to pronounce the form of absolution which is provided in the service, which declares that "our Lord Jesus Christ has left power to His Church, to absolve those who truly repent and believe."

And the priest, only acting ministerially says, "By His authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." The priest acts as the deputy and forgiver of sins—the reconciliation can only be effected on certain fixed conditions of repentance and faith—without evident tokens of these the priest has no right to

pronounce the absolution, and without these, even if he does pronounce it, there is no pardon.

After the Absolution has been pronounced the minister is directed to use a Collect, which appeals to the mercy of Him who so puts away the sins of those who truly repent that He remembers them no more, and which beseeches His pity in behalf of the sick man. The prayer goes on to beg for inward renewal and for outward continuance in the communion of saints, and asks God to consider the sick man's contrition and to accept his tears, to assuage his pain and to grant him forgiveness of all his former sins, and for the merits of Christ to give him everlasting salvation. After that the minister is to use the seventy-first Psalm, the greater part of which is most suitable to circumstances of affliction. The last five verses, however, are omitted, because they utter a strain of praise and thanksgiving which would suppose the sick person to be actually restored to his former health and prosperity.

The general office, though there are added some particular prayers to be occasionally used, concludes with a short petition to the Saviour of the world and with the benedictions, the first of which was inserted as the conclusion of the visitation service in 1549; the latter, which is the old Jewish

form of blessing taken from the sixth chapter of Numbers, was placed here at a somewhat later date.

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*The Occasional Prayers.*

The four prayers at the end of the Visitation Service were added in the year 1661. The first is for a sick child for whom the former part of the service would be too long and unsuitable.

The second is for a sick man when there appears small hope of his recovery.

Its design is to beseech God to give him unfeigned repentance and stedfast faith in the Lord Jesus, and, if He sees fit, to raise him up again; and if not, to receive his soul into His everlasting kingdom. The third is a commendatory prayer for a sick person on the point of departure; for we know that when the dust returns to the earth the spirit returns to God who gave it; and our Blessed Lord, when expiring in the agonies of the Cross, exclaimed, "Into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

And it is related of the Church's first holy Martyr St. Stephen, that when the Jews stoned

him he called upon God and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

The fourth of these occasional prayers is for persons troubled in mind or in conscience. Its intent is to lead such so to judge themselves that they may not, on the one hand, be unduly cast down, or on the other, be too presumptuous and self-confident; and finally, God is asked to deliver them from the fear of the enemy, to give them peace through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ our Lord.



### THE COMMUNION OF THE SICK.

It has been the common practice of the Church of all ages to administer the Holy Communion to the sick and dying.

The Rubric says, that "When the sick person is desirous to receive the Communion in his house, he must give timely notice to the curate, signifying how many there are to communicate with him, which shall be two or three at the least."

However, there was a Rubric added at the end of this office, that "in time of the plague, sweat, or such other like contagious times of sickness or diseases, when none of the parish or neighbours can be gotten to communicate with the sick in their houses for fear of the infection, upon special request of the diseased the minister may alone communicate with him." By "having all things necessary" for administering the Holy Communion the Rubric requires that it should be given decently and in order as in the church, *i.e.*, a surplice should be worn and a proper communion service used, and a linen cloth placed upon the table at the sick person's bedside.

“At the time of the distribution of the Holy Communion, it is also said, the priest shall first receive the Communion himself, and after minister it to them that are appointed with the sick, and, last of all, to the sick person.”

This Rubric was evidently inserted to avoid any danger from contagion to those who partook with the sick.

The next long Rubric declares certain cases in which a man may be a spiritual partaker of the body and blood of Christ, though he may be prevented from actually receiving the sacred elements. “If he truly repent him of his sins, and steadfastly believe that Jesus Christ hath suffered death upon the Cross for him, and shed His blood for his redemption, earnestly remembering the benefits he hath thereby, and giving him hearty thanks therefore, he doth eat and drink the body and blood of our Saviour Christ profitably to his soul’s health, although he do not receive the sacrament with his mouth.”

### THE ORDER FOR THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD.

In all history, whether sacred or profane, we find that the care of dead bodies has ever been an act of religious worship. The Romans had a deity who, as they supposed, presided over funeral rites, and the burial of the dead was esteemed by them "a divine institution and a law of the immortal gods."

We know from the mummies which are to be seen in our museums the care which the Egyptians took of the body after death. They attained to such perfection in the art of embalming that bodies are now to be seen in this and in other countries in a complete state of preservation after a lapse of more than three thousand years. The Book of Genesis gives us an account of the funerals of Abraham and Sarah and Isaac and Jacob, and we find that the usual custom of the Jews, as well as of the Egyptians, was, after embalming the body, to inter it or deposit it in the earth.

In succeeding ages the custom prevailed, as it still does in the East, to burn dead bodies, and this was owing partly to a fear that if corpses were

simply buried in the earth they might be dug up and subjected to some indignity.

One ancient author shows that the origin of burning arose from an idea that thus the soul might be separated from gross inactive matter, and so might be at liberty to take its flight to the heavenly realms. Wherever Christianity took the place of heathenism the burning of dead bodies fell into disuse, and the custom was not heard of in the Roman Empire after the fourth century.

In the Christian Church its members have always been careful to commit the body to the ground with decent respect.

We do not exactly know with what rites the funeral service was performed in the Primitive Church, but we know from the writings of the Fathers that psalmody was a chief part of the solemnity. They gave thanks to God, as is still the custom in the Church, for delivering the deceased "out of the miseries of this sinful world," and prayed that at the time of the general resurrection He would complete the glory and happiness of his elect both in body and soul.

Funeral orations were sometimes pronounced, and the Holy Communion was administered.

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*Of the Introductory Rubrics.*

The first Rubric cautions the minister that "the office ensuing is not to be used for any that die unbaptized or excommunicate, or have laid violent hands on themselves." This prohibition of reading the burial service over the unbaptized is quite in accordance with the ancient practice of the Church. In the Council of Braga, which was held in 563 (A.D.), it was determined that in such cases the burial office should not be used.

A strict attention to the Rubric may be the means of making parents more careful in bringing their children as soon as possible after birth to Holy Baptism.

The service would not be applicable to the case of an unbaptized person who could not be said to have been a member of the Christian Church on earth; the Church at the same time pronounces no opinion about the eternal condition of infants who die unbaptized. And again, the office is not to be used in the case of the excommunicate, *i.e.*, as the Canon expresses it, "One who is denounced for some grievous and notorious crime, and no man able to testify of his repentance."

In the present state of things, when there is so

little discipline exercised in the Church, of course this part of the Rubric has slight consideration.

The time may come, though certainly present appearances are against the supposition, when there may be a revival of such discipline as existed in earlier times, and then the Church may have again to decide whether in the case of open and notorious evil livers this ancient rule is to be observed.

At present it seems that, unless proper ecclesiastical authorities pronounce a sentence of excommunication upon any individual, no clergyman can treat him as such, or refuse him the right of burial.

The third class to whom Christian burial is refused is that of persons who "have laid violent hands upon themselves;" *i.e.*, those who have committed self-murder, not being in a state of insanity. The coroner and the jury under him have to decide whether the person who has "laid violent hands upon himself" was, or was not, at the time in his right senses; and after a coroner's warrant certifying that the minister may lawfully bury the body, he is not at liberty "to refuse or to delay to bury it."

There may however be occasions when, notwithstanding the legal warrant, it would go greatly

against a clergyman's conscience to use the whole of the Burial Service.

The second Rubric says, "The priest and the clerks meeting the corpse at the entrance of the churchyard, and going before it, either into the church or towards the grave, shall say or sing," etc. This Rubric authorizes the minister if he chooses to omit going into the church at all, and to read the whole service at the grave; and this is always the custom pursued in cases of infectious diseases.

The minister begins the service with the words which were originally addressed by Jesus to Martha, when He was going to the grave of Lazarus His departed friend, at Bethany, "I am the resurrection and the life," etc.

This, as well as the second sentence from the Book of Job,—“I know that my Redeemer liveth,” etc.,—has been used in the Burial Service of the Church from the earliest times.

The third sentence, from the first Epistle to Timothy and the Book of Job,—“We brought nothing into the world,” etc.,—teaches the Christian mourner patience under his affliction, and resignation to the Divine will.

Though it requires a great amount of faith in God, we are to give thanks to Him for every-

thing, even for the severest trials and afflictions of life, such as the death of friends, for, says the Apostle St. Paul, "this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning us."

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*Of the Psalms and Lessons.*

In the ancient Burial Office of the Church of England there was the option given of using any of a large number of Psalms, including the seven Penitential Psalms; but at the last revision in 1661, Psalms thirty-two and ninety only were inserted. The former was probably composed by King David when Joab reproached him for showing his subjects the great grief he felt for his son Absalom, who had been slain in the rebellion.

The ninetieth was written by Moses, the leader of Israel, on the death of a vast multitude of the people who were sentenced to die in the wilderness, and to lose the promised land of Caanan, for their obstinacy and want of faith.

After the Psalms out of the Old Testament follows the Proper Lesson out of the New, which the Church has selected from the sublimest chapter



which St. Paul wrote on the resurrection of the dead, which is "the foundation of our faith, the pillar of our hope, and the keystone of the Christian fabric."

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*Of the Devotions at the Grave.*

"When they come to the grave, (the Rubric says) while the corpse is made ready to be laid into the earth, the priest shall say, or the priest and clerks shall sing, etc., 'Man that is born of a woman,' etc." The Church here presents us with some solemn meditations on the shortness and uncertainty of human life.

And we are called upon to acknowledge our dependance on God, and to confess that by our sins He is justly offended; and that we pray the merciful Saviour, the most worthy Judge Eternal, to deliver us from the bitter pains of the second and eternal death, and to support us in our last hour, and to prevent us falling from Him in the agonies of death.

The words "Suffer us not in our last hour for any pains of death to fall from Thee," are taken from a German hymn by Luther, where the words

are, "Suffer us not to fall from the consolation of true faith."

Then follows the interment of the body, and here, as an old Latin poet tells us, the Romans used to take their leave of their departed friends, and bid them farewell for ever. "Then (it is said in the Rubric) the earth shall be cast upon the body by some standing by." This is generally done by the sexton, though in the first Prayer-book of King Edward the Rubric stood thus, "Then the priest casting earth upon the corpse shall say," etc. The words were altered to their present form in 1552.

The casting earth upon the body at its burial was regarded by the old Romans as an act of piety. And Horace, one of their ancient poets, speaks of earth being thrice cast upon the body.

And so when earth is cast upon the coffin, the priest commits the body to the ground with the triple form, "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust," with the declaration of the "sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be like unto His glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself."

After the interment of the body a consolatory sentence is to be said or sung, taken from the fourteenth chapter of Revelation.

Originally it might have been applied to those who in the early Church died a martyr's death, but the words are now equally suitable to all who die in the faith of Jesus Christ.

Then the priest says what is called the Lesser Litany, "Lord, have mercy upon us," etc. and the Lord's Prayer.

And then are offered two concluding prayers, in the former of which we thank God for having delivered the departed from the miseries of 'this sinful world, knowing that the longer he continued in it, the more sins he would have committed, and the more trials and dangers he would have been called to suffer.

And then we pray for the speedy advent of Christ's kingdom, that "we with all those that are departed in the true faith of God's holy name, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in His eternal and everlasting glory."

The last prayer commences with the words our Saviour used at the resurrection of Lazarus at Bethany, and in it we declare our certainty of the resurrection of all true believers unto eternal

life, and pray that when we depart this life we may rest in Christ, as our hope is that our brother doth, and that at the last day we may receive the blessing pronounced on all who love and fear Him.

The burial office concludes as the Morning and Evening Service do with the benediction of St. Paul, and this was added at the last Review of the Prayer-book.

**OF THE THANKSGIVING OF WOMEN AFTER CHILD-  
BIRTH, COMMONLY CALLED THE CHURCHING OF  
WOMEN.**

The Churching of Women is a very ancient custom derived from the Jewish Church, the rite of purification being especially enjoined in the twelfth chapter of Leviticus. And we know that soon after our Lord's birth, it is said in the second chapter of St. Luke, "When the days of her (*i.e.*, of the Virgin Mary's) purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord, (as it is written in the law of the Lord, every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord), and to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons."

In our first Common Prayer-book this office was called "The Order of the Purification of Women."

The feeling which actuates this service, is to be traced far beyond the time of the Jewish religion, even to the first beginning of the world when the Lord God said to fallen Eve, "In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children."

The sense of this, and of the providence and kindness of God in granting a safe deliverance in childbirth, must ever excite a feeling of gratitude. And the acknowledgment that original sin is inherited by children from their parents, directs the mother to return to the Church with the "sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving."

It is usual for married women to attend the Church at the end of the month, if their strength will allow them to do so. Mothers of illegitimate children are not admitted to the service, though in the old time it was the custom to church them after they had done penance.

The Rubric directs the woman "to come into the Church decently apparelled." It was customary for her formerly to appear with a white covering or veil, which was looked upon as a token of modesty, more suitable than the ordinary headdress, and which seems to have been sometimes provided by the Church. For in an inventory of goods belonging to St. Benet's, Gracechurch Street, London, in 1560, there is mention made of "a churching cloth fringed white damask."

Bishop Sparrow on this point, says "The woman that is to be churched is to have a veil: and good reason for it, as St. Paul says, "Every woman,

when she prays in public, ought to have a veil or covering on the head," (1 Cor. xi. 5,) in token of her modesty and subjection; then, much more, when she is to sit in a more eminent place of the Church, near to the Holy Table, apart from the rest of her sex, in the public view, ought she to have such a veil or covering. Nor can it be deemed unreasonable for her at that time to have a veil or habit distinct from others; so that it may be known for whom thanks is then particularly given."

The woman is directed when she comes into the church "to kneel down in some convenient place."

Before the Reformation this was at the church door. In the first Liturgy of King Edward this was altered to "nigh unto the place where the table standeth."

No particular place is mentioned in our present Prayer-book, it is left to the discretion of the the minister, or the Ordinary; but it is very usual and certainly a most decent custom for the woman to kneel at the communion rails.

The Rubric does not state when the office is to be used. Very often it is read before the general thanksgiving, and then the woman remains in her usual seat in the church, which certainly

does not appear so regular as the custom of kneeling at the rail, and being churched; if in the morning, before the Communion Service; if in the evening, at the end of the prayers.

There are two Psalms appointed, the 116th and the 127th, one of which is to be read at the discretion of the minister, and the shorter Litany, and the Lord's Prayer. The office concludes with a short Collect, which praises God for His mercies in delivering the woman safely, and prays that she may "live and walk according to His Will in this life present, and may be partaker of everlasting glory in the life to come, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

The last Rubric says, that "the woman that comes to give her thanks must offer accustomed offerings." By this is meant some offering to God's appointed minister who performs the office, just as under the old Jewish law, the woman at the time of her purification in the Temple, was obliged to bring an offering of thanksgiving, and even the very poorest had to present something, however small. The latter part of the Rubric declares that, "if there be a communion, it is convenient, (which means it is fitting,) that she receives the Holy Communion."



## A COMMINATION,

OR DENOUNCING OF GOD'S ANGER AND JUDGMENTS AGAINST SINNERS, WITH CERTAIN PRAYERS, TO BE USED ON THE FIRST DAY OF LENT, AND AT OTHER TIMES, AS THE ORDINARY SHALL APPOINT.

This service is a relic of that solemn public penitence which formed so distinct a feature in the discipline of the early Church. On the first day of Lent it was customary for those who had been convicted of grievous sin to present themselves in the church as penitents. They were arrayed in sackcloth, and had ashes sprinkled on their heads, whence the day was called Ash Wednesday; they were then publicly expelled the church, and were not re-admitted, by the Bishop and clergy, until they could show some proofs of their repentance. Of course the Reformation put a stop to this discipline which had so long degenerated into a mere form, just as is the idle ceremony which is still practised by the Church of Rome, of pouring ashes on persons' heads whether they are penitent or not.

The Reformers express a wish for the revival of "godly discipline," though they were the last to desire anything like the revival of form and superstition into which the primitive discipline had fallen in the middle age.

All that the Church can now do in that respect is to rely upon an improved state of public opinion to condemn the grosser branches of immorality and vice.

Some persons object to this service, and say that they do not wish to go to church for the purpose of cursing their neighbours.

We must remember that the words which the clergyman reads are not the words of man, but of God. The origin of repeating the curses against outrageous sin is of divine institution, and was twice enjoined to Moses, and afterwards followed by Joshua, his successor in the leadership of Israel.

It is not unsuitable that in the Lenten season these curses of the Jewish Law should be uttered in the Christian Church. For though Christ has suffered to take away the curse of the law, by becoming "a curse for us," His atonement is only availing to those who believe in Him, and truly repent of their sins.

On all others the curse of the Law, and the wrath

of God still abide. As the sentences are read "all the people are to answer, and say at the end of each one of them, Amen."

The object of this is not to curse themselves and their neighbours, as some imagine, but only to acknowledge that they deserve such a curse. For it is not said cursed be he, or may he be cursed, but cursed is he that is guilty of any of these sins. And when the people say to this, "Amen," they merely assent to the truth of what is affirmed, just as they say, "Amen," at the end of the Creed.

When these curses on sin have been pronounced, the Church well knowing that all of us, more or less, have been guilty of those sins, and therefore are subject to God's wrath unless we repent, has appointed an impressive discourse, mostly taken from the Scriptures, to be read to excite us to repentance, that so we may escape the terrible judgments awaiting the wicked at the last.

"And then (as the Rubric directs) shall they all kneel upon their knees, and the priests and clerks, kneeling in the place where they are accustomed to say the Litany, shall say this Psalm," *i.e.*, the fifty-first, the most solemn of the Penitential Psalms which David composed.

After the short sentences called the Lesser

Litany, the Lord's Prayer, some petitions, and three Collects most suitable to the condition of penitents, the Communion Service concludes with a blessing, taken out of the sixth chapter of Numbers, which was formerly used by the Jewish priests in blessing the congregation of Israel.

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